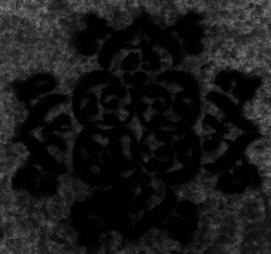
# CHRISTIANITIE

# MAINTAINED.

## OR

## A Discouery of sundry Doctrines tending to the Ouerthrovve of Christian Religion:

*Contayned in the Answere to a Booke entitled,* Mercy and Truth, *or,* Charity maintayned by Catholiques.



*Bringing into captiuity all Vnderstanding vnto the Obedience of Christ.* 2. Cor. 10. 5.

*What is more contrary to Faith, then many beleeue any thing, as Truth, because others vnwisely vse to beleeue?* S. Bernard. Epist. 190.

Permissu Superiorum, 1638.

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Contayned in the Answere to a Booke entituled, Mere and Truth, or, Charity maintayned by Catholiques.


BRITISH MUSEUM

Brought into captivity all Vnderstanding vnto the Obedience of Christ. 2. Cor. 10. 5.

What is more contrary to Truth, then not to believe any thing, to which Reason cannot reach? S. Bernard. Epist. 190.

Permilla Superiorum. 1613.

# TO THE
# HIGH AND MIGHTY
# PRINCE,
# CHARLES
## King of Great-Britaine, France, and Ireland, &c.

*May it please your Most Excellent Maiesty,*

My Presumption were not easily excusable (*Most gracious Soueraigne*) in flying to the Sanctuary of your Maiesty, for the protection of this poore Treatise, if the great importance of the Cause, whereof

Epistle, did not change my *Feare* into *Hope*, and raise vp my *Hope* as high as *Confidence*, that *Christianity Maintayned*, by vvhat pen soeuer it be performed, needeth not feare to find benigne acceptance from so Gracious and Great a King as you are; vvho glory more in that most Sacred name of being a *Christian*, then in that most ancient Stocke of Royall Progenitours, vvhich so gloriously adornes the Diademe of your Sacred Maiesty. For I do not in this occasion pretend to act either the Offensiue or Defensiue part of any one particular Religion, honoured vvith the Name of *Christianity*; but I only come in the generall Name of a *Christian* Church, vvithout treating vvhether it be *Latin* or *Greeke*, *East* or *VVest*, of *England* or of *Rome*; and therefore I cannot dispayre of being graciously admitted by your Maiesty.

My *Scope*, and *VVorke*, as I am saying, is only to maintaine the authority

of Holy Scripture, the Mystery of the Blessed Trinity, the Deity of our Blessed Sauiour, the infallibility of his Apostles, the powver of his Miracles, the necessity of his Grace, and of the absolute Certainty of Christian Fayth; against an Aduersary, vvho seeketh to turne the *diuine beliefe* of Christians into *humane Opinion*: (a) Who teacheth that our assurance of holy Scripture, & of all the verityes contained therein, is but (b) *probable*, and *credible*; and consequently such as may vvell be false: Who continually vrgeth, (c) *that God, as sure, as he is good*, neither doth, nor can require of Christians an *infallible, and certainly vn-erring Beliefe* of his vvord; That men, neither are bound, nor can belieue diuine Reuelations (d) further then they are made apparent & euident to them; and that it sufficeth vnto Saluation *to belieue the Gospell* (e) *as vve do other Stories*; as much as vve do (f) *Cesars Commentaries*, or *the Hi-*

(a) Pag. 36. & 37. & Pag. 113. n. 15.

(b) Ibid.

(c) Pag. 112. lin. 31

(d) Pag. 330. lin. 13. 25. 33.

(e) Pag. 37. lin. 20. & sequ.

(f) Pag. 327. n. 5. lin. 28.

*fury of Schisme*: Who proclaimes (g) the Apostles, with the whole Church of their time, to haue erred in matters of faith, euen after they had receiued the Holy Ghost; That after their Deaths, (h) the whole Church was presently infected with vniuersall Errours; and that the whole Church of the (i) Gentils may fall away in to Infidelity: Who shutteth (k) the gates of *Mercy* against penitent sinners: Finally who openeth an easy way for the deniall of all those maine points of Christianity, aboue mentioned, as it will appeare in this ensuing Treatise.

(g) Pag. 144. n. 31.

(h) Pag. 292. in fine & 293. initio.

(i) Pag. 338. lin. 5.

(k) Pag. 292. & 295.

Vouchsafe therefore, *Most gracious Soueraigne*, to consider how Christianity is impugned by some, euen in this your Kingdome, and the inconueniences and dangers thereof; and preuent both them, and such others of the selfe same kind, as may grow greater if they be not preuented, by your Zeale and Care. I cannot doubt, but that your Ma-

Maiesty will doe euen for the Piety of the thing it selfe, though my Aduersary (who yet pretends that he is wholy of your Maisties Religion) giues you a more particular offence; by departing from the very doctrines, which you beleeue. For besides diuers other single differences, he neither allowes the *Nine and thirty Articles*, which your Maiesty, in your Royall Declaration, affirmes to contains the true Doctrine of the Church of *England*, nor holds he the *Succession of Bishops* to be necessary in Gods Church; which experience teaches to tend expresly to the confusion of the said *Church*, and destruction of *Monarchy*. Pag. 356. & seqq.

And though God hath made your Maiesty most happy, both in a Royall Consort, of singular and rare endowments both of Body and Mind, & with a plentifull and most hopefull Issue, (which with my hart I begge may euen last to the very end of the world)

and

and with an Obedient & Loyall People, and with power both at land and sea, and with times both of Plenty and Peace, vvhilst almost all your Neighbours are in vvarre and vvant; yet nothing vvill euer be more able, to establish You in all these Felicityes, nor to auert all disasters from your *Maiesty*, then not to permit, that there be any conniuence at such enormous Errours as these, vvhich partly openly, & partly couertly, are vented against Christ our Lord, and all Christian Fayth.

The God of Heauen preserue your Maiesty in all Health and Happinesse, to his greatest Glory, your Maiestyes ovvne Felicity, and to the ioy & comfort of all your Kingdomes.

*Your Maiesties most humble, and most obedient loyall subiect.*

I. H.

# To the Christian Reader.

WONDER not (Christian Reader) That I entitle this Little Treatise, Christianity Maintained. I give it that Name, because that is the thing which I endeavour heer to make good, against one who overthrows Christianity, not by remote Principles, or strained Inferences, but by direct assertions, & cleere deductiõs, naturally flowing from diuers of his doctrines: which if it be made appeare, I cannot but hope, that all who take comfort in the glorious, and most happy name of Christian, will give me the right hands of fellowship in this Common Cause. Ancient Pacianus sayes (a) of euery orthodoxe believer, that Christian is his name, Catholicke his Surname. Catholicke cannot be conceiued without Christian. But prou. Christianity so long as it is maintained, wil afford some common Principles of beliefe, which may direct men to find, that one Catholicke Church of Christians, by meanes whereof our Lord hath decreed to give Grace and Glory. Let therefore neither preiudice auert, nor priuat respects diuert the good Readers vnderstanding from weighing in an equal ballance that which is here layd before it. God forbid any

(a) Epist. ad Sem.

Christians should exceed their Superiours in Policy of the World, would not dare for their private quarells, enter while they were encamped with a hostile army of Romanes: or be loth admitted thereto the Romane, who seeks ever to make peace at home, by the prosecutions of the Enemy abroad, judging it wisedome to be swayed with feare of greater evill, especially when they could do it, under the honourable title of a Common (c) good. In which respect, I beg aske, and as if it were forget at this present, the Surname of Catholicke, while my scope is to maintaine Christianity.

(c) Liu. lib. 2.

1. But I must notwithstanding by the way desire thee, by example of this Man whose errours I undertake to discover, that thou wilt be pleased, to reflect upon the misery into which they do bring themselues, who forsaking in truth that glorious Surname, content themselues with the only name of Christians. For consequently hauing lost the Guift, and Light of supernaturall and infused Fayth, which in their Christendome they receiued, they lye so open to all manner of deceites, that though they be warned of them, they runne vnawares into them: because not regarding, or not esteeming and weighing the necessity and importance of a Guide, they follow the Eye of their owne Reason only, which is too short-sighted to preserue them from falling into them manifold pitfalls, which lye on all sides of Christian Fayth, as we learne by all those, who in all ages haue swarued from it.

2. This Man, as the world knowes, had warning abundant, in a little Treatise called, The Direction, that he should not goe a destructiue way tending to the ouerthrow of all Religion, no lesse then of Catholicke Doctrine. How little he hath obserued it, will appeare by the ensuing discourse, penned to the like intent, and to no other.

Direct. 40.4. per totã.

which, there I dare say the Direction hath its place, to prevent, or rather cure, its disease Scepticisme, secretly creeping into this Kingdome under the shrouds of Naturall Reason. The venome of which Selfbeing still, as it seems, growing, or as I may say, compounding, it is no wonder if the enemy of mankind doth use all his art to make that Treatise more and more odious, by which it began to be detected.

3. For to what other purpose doth this man in his preface say, against all Truth, and against the mind of the Letter, that the Author of the Direction, fastens the (a) imputation of Atheisme and Irreligion upon all wise and gallant men that are not of our owne Religion? and this in a different Letter, as the very words of the Direction, who yet hath neither any such words or sense. And againe, that (b) as the Samaritans sowr in the Disciples countenances, that they meant to goe to Hierusalem, so you pretend it is even legible in the foreheads of those men, that they (that is some Protestants of worth, and learning and authority too) are even going, nay making hast to Rome; words set downe in a different Letter, and in the same context with the other words of the Direction, which yet hath not any one such word, or syllable. And the Author was farre from presuming to meddle with the intentions of those persons, with whom this man would make him odious. The Direction falsified.

(a) Pref. fol. 2.

(b) Pref. fol. 2.

4. He neither commended, nor discommended, nor so much as considered their vicinity to us. His purpose was to shew that for want of some publicke infallible Authority, they could not possibly avoid frequent variations, by which whether they fell to come nearer to us, or to go further from us, was nothing materiall to his purpose. Let others be

Christians should succeed her defection? why of the Heresies, which most disease their private quarells, even while they were assailed with a hostile army of Romans: or be loth to displease the Romans, who loathe not often to make peace at home, by the pranctations of the Enemy abroad, judging it wisest, done to be swayed with feare of greater euill, especially when they could do it, vnder the honourable title of a Common (c) good. In which respect, I lay aside, and as if I were forget at this present, the Surname of Catholicke, while my scope is to maintaine Christianity.

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Direct. c. 4. per tot.

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vent, or rather save, to discover Socinianisme covertly creep-
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*disabled to destroy, let pictures be defaced, but all that is done he undone. These last alterations will prooue his intent as strongly as the others can, wherein they happen to agree with vs. For his scope being to discouer the impieties of the Socinians, and to preuent the hurt of soules by forewarning them of the danger; to this end he declared some of the reasons for which this Sect disperseth it selfe, and is able to do it, by working vpon the minds of diuers Protestants. The chiefest he affirmed to be the want of a publicke infallible Iudge of Controuersyes, without which they are left to their owne priuate spirit, or wit, and discourse, which must of necessity bring forth a multitude of differences, altercations, and alterations, and end in Socinianisme, the quintessence whereof is to resolue Fayth into Opinion, or into euery mans owne Reason and Persuasion. Now to shew that for want of some liuing Guide, alterations in matters of Fayth and Religion must needes be frequent, he alledged such instances, as lay open to the knowledge, and euen to the eye of euery man, and might afford a more sensible demonstration of what he intended to euince: Yet so, that (as I said before) his Argument receaued strength, not from their comming neere to vs, but from their altering from themselues. From thence to inferre, that they must intend Popery, because they happen to agree with vs in some things or rather seeme to agree, but indeed differ; is iust as if one should say: The first Protestants in England, intended to persist in Papistry, euen when they purposed the contrary, yea euen when they did actually depart from vs: Because (forsooth) they were not so furious against euery particular doctrine of Catholicks, as some others were. And I wonder how these men dare believe the B. Trinity, and other principall mysteries of Christian Fayth, since they must by this*

[illegible] agree with Papists, and so may frame themselves be on a way to Popery.

5. Others are apt to believe on the contrarie side, that the Director was so farre from hoping that Protestants would become Catholicks by these degrees, as that he rather feared it might be a cause of some temptation to Catholicks, and a setling of Protestancy more effectually then could have been performed either by the fervour of Zelots, or feare of Death, or any other meanes. And therfore I make bold to say, that although we Catholicks, his Maiesties most humble and loyall subiects, should be most unworthy and ungratefull creatures, if we did not with deepest thankefulnes acknowledge our infinite obligation to the tender Clemency of our dread Soueraigne: Yet I may truly say (if such a Truth may be spoken without offence) that by many degrees They are more unreasonable, and unthankefull, who are unquiet, because the most moderate, that is, the most powerfull meanes which can be thought of, are put in execution, for establishing that which they pretend to desire, I meane the Protestant Religion; unlesse indeed they desire Protestancy should perish, if it do not in all respects perfectly and punctually sute with their humours. For it is a true saying; Moderate things may last, but no Violence can long endure.

6. This then was the Directours intention, free from all malignity, and directed only to matters of Religion, and good of soules in the manner declared above. Which to be true, I have heard him affirme most seriously by all that can be feared, or hoped for in the next life, for all eternity; and therefore he could not but be sorry, that any writing of his was interpreted to an other meaning, of which if he had but once imagined his words to have been capable, himselfe without so much as hearing any plea of defense, would have been

the

*the first Authours of errours to be destroyed, and all memory of them to be forgotten. And he hopes that upon this future Declaration it will be believed, that if he erred, it was against his owne intention, and not, as more errors, so errors are sometimes (as Blessed S. Austine speakes) not by any love to error, but by an errour of love, to the eternall good of soules, by preventing the danger of their falling into precipices of Socinian doctrines.*

Lib. 11. Cinitate. 9.

7. *But the foule Imputation wherewith, even in the Epistle Dedicatory to the Kings most Excel. Maiesty, this man is bold to calumniate the whole Order of Iesuites, with instant doubtlesse to make the* Director, *and his endeavours hatefull, (warning it,* that Order which envenomes poison it selfe, and makes the Roman Religion more malignant and turbulent then otherwise it would be; whole very Rule and Doctrine obliges them to make all men, as much as lyes in them, subiects vnto Kings, & seruants vnto Christ no further then it shall please the Pope) *is a most virulent slaunder, and most vniust vntruth. For the clearing whereof, though we might content our selues either with his ignorance of our* Order, Rule, *and Doctrine; or with the guiltinesse of his owne Conscience, in regard, that probably he cannot choose but know, that the intents of them, and our proceedings, are nothing such as he proclaymes them: yet I thought fit here to touch briefly some grounds, whereby his Maiesty chiefly, and all others may receaue satisfaction, that there is no such thing in our* Order, Rule, *and* Doctrine, *as this man is pleased to tell vpon it.*

8. *And first (in regard, by what he sayth in his Preface, of the fourth Vow which the Iesuites make of speciall obedience to the Pope, proper to their Order, it*

seemes,

*seemes, that which he doth vrge in his Epistle Dedicatory, hath relation to that* VOW *) it is to be vnderstood, that, that* Fourth VOW *is wholy cast Missiones, concerning Millions, in order to the help of soules, as the words of that* Vow *expresly speake, and their* Constitutions *declare thus:* Tota intentio huius Voti Obediendi Summo Pontifici fuit, & est circa Missiones, & sic intelligi oportet literas Apostolicas, vbi de hac Obedientia loquitur, in omnibus quæ iusserit Summus Pontifex, & quocunq; miserit &c. The whole intention of this Vow to obey the Pope, was, & is concerning Missions, and so the Apostolicall Letters are to be vnderstood, where they speake of this Obedience, in all things which the Pope shall commaund, and whitherfoeuer he shall send &c. *As for their* Rules *in generall, they are confirmed by the same Authority, which confirmed the Rules of all Religious Orders, and there is nothing in them which is not most holy, and which hath not been accounted such, euen by our Enemies: or if there be any thing to be found in them otherwise, let this man produce it if he can. They are not so hard to come by, but that S. Paules Churchyard may oftimes afford them. Doctrine their Order approoues none but what is taught by other Catholicke Diuines, as hath been often demonstrated against such as this man is. And therefore we hold our selues bound in all duety to be, and to professe our selues to be, as loyall subiects to the soueraigne* Maiesty of our King, *as louing and tender towards his* Sacred Person, *as respectfull and dutifull to his* Commaunds, *as any other of his subiects of what profession soeuer; and to be bound also to teach all other subiects, that the same subiection is due, not only for feare, but for* Conscience *also, by the law of God, of na-*



Coeffeteau. p. 2. ar. 5. cap. 13. l. 6.

ture, and of Nations. This we shall be ready to make good at all times; as also to give his Maiesty full satisfaction, by what meanes his Maiesty shall be pleased to appoint, in any particular point of Doctrine, or Practise, which is, or may be imputed to our Rule, or Order.

9. It were over great boldnesse to appeale in this to the living testimony of him, who in his experience abroad hath beene acquainted with more Communities of our Order, then this man hath beene with Persons in his late changes when he professed himselfe a Roman Catholicke, and conversed with divers of vs: And by the equall hand which he carryeth towards all sorts of persons, obligeth all without preiudice to any. His Maiesty may be pleased to vse what meanes in his Royall wisedome he shall thinke best. And if he should thinke it fit to pitch vpon such a Testimony, we should esteeme our selves happy in the choyce; notwithstanding that M. Chillingworth may conceaue otherwise, in regard that he will needs haue it, that Signor Con hath prohibited the Director from writing bookes any more, or at least, hath reason to do it.

Pref. n. 25.

10. But he must know, that we are of a different disposition from the Socinians, and therefore though that Person were not of that eminent Integrity, Piety, Wisedome, Modesty, and all kind of worth as he is, who by so many wayes hath obliged many great Persons to our nation, and howerly receiues a most gracious regard from those whose iudgment and example all should dread, we esteeme it a great happinesse to be subiect to all lawfull Auctorities. And whatsoeuer our skill be in Logicke, yet by Gods grace we will alwayes in hart, word, and deed maintaine these to be good and lawfull Arguments: A Person of so eminent wisedome as he is whom this man names, aduises me not to write; Therefore it is fit-

tell for me not to write. And this others: A Person endued with Authority, commandes me not to write: Therefore it is not only fit, but necessary for me not to write. But this Logicke is no Philosophy with Socinians, who will have no Maisters but themselues, euen in matters concerning the eternall salvation of their soules, and will one day find to their cost, that Holy S Bernard vttered a most important Truth when he said: Qui se sibi Magistrum constituit, stulto se Discipulum subdit. He who will be his owne Maister, shall be scholler to a foole. But it is time for me to take vp & conclude this Preface with this caueat, that I would not haue the Reader cõceiue that in this little volume I haue touched all this mans Doctrines which tend to the ouerthrow of Christianity, but only such as were most obuious. Nor is it my purpose at this time, exactly to cõfute his grõds or answere his obiections, which may be done hereafter. My maine busines is to demonstrate, that vnder the Name of Christians, he vndermines Christianity, and setles Socinianisme. Which is the cause that moued me to set forth this short Treatise for a present Antidote, till a larger answere can be published. For who will aduenture vpon food if he know it is mixed, and euen incorporated with deadly poison? This is the scope of this Treatise, whereto I hope all Christians will concurre. Socinians are but an aggregate of Iewes, Manicheans, Arians, and other condemned sects, which all good Christians ought to detest. I hartily wish their Conuersion: yet if they will obstinately resist, in despite of their inuentions the words of the Apostle will be verified, Iesus Christ yesterday, and to day, the same also for euer. And they shall giue a fearefull account for their contempt of al Churches, and errours against Christian Faith, when repentance will nothing auaile? Euen at that day, when

Heb. 13. 8.

Lib. 3. de fide c. 7. as S. Ambrose *gravely sayth*: The Iew shall perforce acknowledge whom he crucified; when the Manichean shall adore whom he believed not to haue come in flesh; when the Arian shall confesse him to be omnipotent whom he denied. *And I may adde; when all good* Christians *shall ioyfully behold him, whose* Fayth *they laboured to* Maintaine.

## The Doctrines confuted in the ensuing Treatise.

THe *first Doctrine*. That Fayth necessary to Saluation is not infallible. *Chap.* 1.

The grounds of this Doctrine lead to Atheisme. *Chap.* 2.

*The second Doctrine*. That the assurance which we haue of Scriptures is but morall. *Chap.* 3.

*The third Doctrine*: That the Apostles were not infallible in their Writings, but erred with the whole Church of their tyme. *Chap.* 4.

*The fourth Doctrine*, Iniurious to the miracles of our Saviour, and of his Apostles. *Chap.* 5.

*The fifth Doctrine*. By resoluing Fayth into Reason, he destroyes the nature of Fayth, and Beliefe of all Christian Verities. *Chap.* 6.

*The sixt Doctrine*, Destructiue of the Theologicall Vertues of Christian Hope, and Charity. *Chap.* 7.

*The seauenth Doctrine*, Takes away the grounds of Rationall Discourse. *Chap.* 8.

*The eight Doctrine*, Opens a way to deny the B. Trinity, and other high mysteries of Christian Fayth. *Chap.* 9.

*The ninth Doctrine*, Layes grounds to be Constant in no Religion. *Chap.* 10.

*The tenth Doctrine*, Prouides for the impunity, and preseruation of whatsoeuer damnable Errour against Christian Fayth. *Chap.* 11.

The Conclusion.

# CHRISTIANITY MAINTAINED.

OR

## The discouery of sundry Doctrines tending to the Ouerthrow of Christian Religion.

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## The first Doctrine.

### *That Fayth necessary to Saluation is not Infallible.*

### CHAP. I.

CHRISTIAN *Fayth* being the foundation of *Hope*, the eye of *Charity*, the lesser light appointed for the night of this world, the *Way* to Heauen; if this *Foundation* be fauley, this *Eye* deceitfull, this *Light* an Eclypse of itselfe, this *way* erroneous; our *Hope*, *Charity*, *Light*, *Happinesse*, and all *Christianity* must end

end, in worse then nothing, in euerlasting *vnhappines*.

(a) Io. 14. 5. For as *S. Thomas* said to our Sauiour, (a) *We know not whither thou goest, and how can we know the way?* So what will it auaile vs to know *whither* we goe, if we follow a misleading *way*, the Direction of a *Fayth* weake, waueriug, and subiect to Errour? such is Christian Fayth in this man's iudgment deliuered in the *Doctrine* with which I thought fit to begin, in regard it is the substance, and summe of that which he deliuers, and labours to prooue through his whole booke; and is perswaded, that it is of great and singular vse, and demonstrable by vnanswerable arguments.

2. I must confesse, it is of great vse to ground *Socinianisme*, which, as the (b) *Direction* fortold, reiecteth *infallible* supernaturall infused *Fayth* from being necessary to saluation: and maketh our *Christian Fayth* of the Gospell, and of Christ Iesus our Lord and Sauiour to be a meere *human opinion*, resolued into the authority of men, of no greater certainty then other *human Traditions and Histories* knowne by report. Hence the saying in *Charity Maintayned* (*that an absolute certainty of Fayth is necessary to Saluation*) he taxeth deeply as (c) *most pernicious and vncharitable*; and elswhere (d) as a *great errour of dangerous & pernicious consequence*; yea pag. 87. thus he writeth: *Men being possessed with this false principle* (that Infallible Fayth is necessary) *and that it is in vaine to beleeue the Gospell of Christ with such a kind, or degree of assent as they yield to other matter of Tradition, and finding that their Fayth of it is to them indiscernable from the beliefe they giue to the truth of other Stories, are in danger not to*

(b) Cap. 1. p. 7.

(c) Pag. 328.

(d) Pag: 325. n. 3.

beleeue

beliene at all &c. Ieis true, that (pag. 36. n. 8.) he seyth. *We cannot ordinarily haue any rationall and acquired assent, more then morall founded vpon credibilities*, whereby some may conceiue, that besides *humane and rationall Fayth*, he supposes and requires *Diuine Fayth*, which is a pure, sincere, firme adhesion to Gods word, not caused by reason and discourse, but infused by the Holy Ghost's inspiration into a belieuing soule. But in truth he disclaimes from any *necessity* of Diuine Fayth, or any diuine light aboue the light of meere reason, and will haue men to be saued by the natiue forces of human, rationall, and fallible Fayth. *Men* (sayth he) (f) *are vnreasonable*; *God requires not any thing but reason*; *They pretend that heauenly things cannot be seene to any purpose, but by the midday-light: but God will be satisfyed, if we receiue any degree of Light which makes vs leaue* the works of darknesses. *They exact a certainty of Fayth aboue that of sense and science: God desires only that we beliene the conclusion, as the premisses deserue*, wherof in rationall Fayth one is euer weake, credible, and not infallible. And againe pag. 112. n. 154. *Neither God doth, nor man may require of vs, as our duety, to giue a greater assent to the mysteries of our Fayth, then the motiues of credibility* (which are fallible) *deserue*. This is his doctrine, which he deliuers often, & makes vse thereof to reiect the infallible Authority *of Gods Church*: so prophane, impious, & vnchristian, as I wonder that a man professing himselfe a Christian, durst venture to vent the same in print, in a Christian country. For is the certainty of the Fayth which Christians yield to the truth of the Gospell, to the life of Christ Iesus our Lord and Sauiour, to the histo-

(f) Ibi supra pag. 36. n. 8.

Chap. 1. histories of holy Scripture, of no greater *discernable certainty*, then the beliefe we yield to humane traditions? I appeale to the conscience of euery true Christian, whether he do not most cleerely discerne his assent to the Truths of holy Scripture, to be superiour, and incomparably more firme, then his beliefe of meere humane storyes. That the Serpent spake vnto Eue, and perswaded her to eat of the forbidden tree; that our first Parents were naked, and did not perceiue it till they had eaten of the forbidden apple; these storyes & other the like would any Christian beleiue them, yea would they not laugh at them, as they doe at *Æsops* Fables, were they not of more credit with them, then *Cæsars* Commentaries, or *Salusts* histories, as this man * saith, they are not? That God requires not any thing of vs but only reason; That he exacts no more then that we beleiue the misteries of Christian Fayth, with a human fallible assent; That diuine illumination aboue the reach of the light of reason is not necessary, that men may *beleiue* as they ought, *to please*, and *satisfy* God; That God is satisfied with any degree of light, with the meere light of naturall Reason, and with the weake and wauering Fayth, which reason standing vpon probabilities can ground; These be strange and dismall positions, and such as ouerthrow Christianity, as is euident by many reasons. I will point at a few.

* Pag. 327. n. 5.

3. First it is against holy Scripture. *Fayth*, layth S. *Paul, is the substance of things to be hoped for, the argument of things not appearing*: or, as the translation receiued in England hath it, *the euidence, or ground, or confidence of things not seene*. All which signify a firme,

(g) Heb. 11. v. 1.

cer-

certaine, and as I may say *fundamentall Fayth*, much dif-
ferent from whatsoeuer assent, if itbe only probable.
For as S. Bernard disputing against Abailardus (who
likewise taught that *Fayth* was but *Opinion*) fayth touch-
ing this definition of S. Paul: By the name of *Sub-
stance* we are determined to some *certaine* and *setled*
thing, & *Fayth* is not *Opinion* but *Certainty*: *Audis* (h)
(fayth this Saint) *Substantiam*? *Non licet tibi in fide* (h) Epist.
*putare, vel disputare pro libitu, non hac illac vagari per* 190.
*inania opinionum, per devia errorum. Substantiæ nomine,*
*aliquid tibi certum, fixumq; præfigitur. Certis clauderis fi-*
*nibus, certis limitibus coarctaris. Non est enim fides æstima-*
*tio sed certitudo. Doest thou heare the name of Substance?*
*It is not lawfull for thee in Fayth to thinke or to dispute at*
*thy pleasure, nor to wander hither and thither, through the*
*emptines of opinions, or straying errours. By the name of sub-*
*stance, some certaine and setled thing is appointed thee.*
*Thou art shut up within certaine bounds, and confined vnto*
*in limits which are certaine. For Fayth is not an opinion but*
*a certainty.* This is also prooued by the words of the
same Apostle: (i) *Although we, or an Angell from Heu-* (i) Gal. 1.
*uen euangelize to you, beside that which we haue euangelized* v. 8.
*to you, be he anathema*; and where he sayth, (k) *That by* (k) Heb.
*two things vnremoueable, wherein it is impossible for God to* 6. v. 18.
*lye, we may haue a most strong comfort.* For how can it be
most strong if it be grounded only vpon probabilities, as
this man sayth our *Fayth* and *comfort* is? The falshood
whereof is yet further declared by the same Apostle
Ep. 1. ad Thessal. cap. 2. ver. 13. *When you had receiued of*
*vs the word of the hearing of God, you receiued it not as the*
*word of men, but (as it is indeed) the word of God.* And
S. Bernard Ep. 190. allegeth S. Paul to the same pur-

pose, in this manner. *Scio cui credidi, & certus sum, clamat Apostolus* (1. *Tim.* 1.) *& tu mihi subsibilas, Fides est æstimatio? tu mihi ambiguum garris, quo nihil est certius?* But this Truth being certainly beleeued by all *Christians*, it will be needlesse to alleadge more texts of Scripture in confirmation of it. *D. Potter* (in whose behalfe you stept forth) doth euidently contradict your doctrine, when he teacheth (1) that the chiefe ground of *Christian Fayth* is *diuine Reuelation*, and that *nothing but this can erect an act of supernaturall Fayth, which must be absolutely vndoubted, and certaine, and that without this, Fayth is but opinion or persuasion, or at the most an acquired human beliefe.* And Doctour Hooker (whom you alleadge pag. 325. for your opinion) in his Ecclesiasticall Policy pag. 117. writes most expressely in these words: The greateſt assurance generally with all men, is that we haue by plaine aspect and intuitiue beholding &c. Scripture with Christian men being receiued as the word of God, that, for which we haue probable, yea that which we haue necessary reason for, yea that which we see with our eyes, is not thought so sure, as that which the Scripture of God teacheth, because we hold, that his speach reuealeth there what himself seeth, and therefore the strongest proofe of all, and the most necessary assented vnto by vs, which doe thus receiue the Scripture, is the Scripture.

(1) Pag. 143.

4. If we haue recourse to reason, grounded on principles, which no Christian denyes, this doctrine likewise cannot be tolerated. For if a Christian be not *certaine* that his beliefe is true, he may according to your owne confession doubt, whether it be not false

Accor-

According to your owne confession, I say, seeing your selfe goe about to proue (m) that Christian Fayth cannot be absolutly certaine; because if it were so, it would follow, that any least *doubting* though resisted and *inuoluntary*, would destroy it; which manifestly declares, that doubting can well consist with that sort of *vncertaine* Christian *Fayth* which you goe about to vent. If once way be giuen for Christians to fall vpon doubting of their Fayth, why may not they put themselues vpon an examination in good earnest, and as doubting of the grounds thereof? And if this kind of examination be lawfull, who can discommend an alteration, if they chance to find cause? as it is very possible they may, if their first assent was not infallible? How then could *S. Paul* so absolutely say: Although we, or an Angell from Heauen should euangelize to you, beside that which we haue euangelized, be he *anathema*? (m) Pag. 326. n. 4. Gal. 1. 8.

5. But let vs goe a step further. This Assertion giues way to beleeue, that the contrary *to Christian Fayth* retaines some probability, in regard that no high degree of probability can of it selfe wholy deuest the opposite part of all probability, this being excluded by *certainty* alone: Mistake me not, as if I meant that the probability of one side were sufficient to bestow probability on the other. This only I say, that whosoeuer beleeues any point only with probability, hath in his vnderstanding no present disposition which of it selfe is repugnant to probability for the contrary side: And if Christians must be of this disposition in their beliefe, they can haue no setled or firme resolution, neuer to imbrace the contrary of that which for

the present is their beliefe, which ought notwithstanding to be the resolution of euery true Christian beliewer.

6. This is not all. If we follow this doctrine, this other vnchristian Consequence cannot be auoided: That one may be saued, though he beliewe some sect contrary to *Christian Religion*, as Iudaisme, Turcisme, Paganisme, or Atheisme, with as great, or greater probability, then he beliewes the articles of *Christian Fayth*. For proofe I need alleadg nothing beside what your selfe suggest. In one place you tell vs, that (n) *any fayth if it be but a graine of mustardseed, if it worke by loue, shall certainly auaile with God, and be accepted of him.* In another (o) you endeauour to proove, that a probable persuasion, and *hope of infinite and eternall happinesse, prouided for all those that obey Christ Iesus, may be able to sway our will to Obedience, and encounter with all those temptations, which flesh and blood can suggest to auert vs from it.* Ioine these two doctrines together, & the issue will be; that any probable beliefe of Christian verities, or euen of a God, must suffice to saluation, as enabling vs to *worke by loue*. Now it is cleere that your *graine of mustardseed*, your *any probable persuasion or hope*, are verified in any low degree of probability of fayth in Christ, or God; and yet they do not exclude equal or greater probability in behalfe of the contrary part (for example that Christ is not the Sauiour of the world, or that there is not a God:) whence it followes that a man may attayne saluation, though he beliewe with equall or greater probability, that Christ is not the Sauiour of the world, or that there is not a God, then is that wherewith he be-

(n) Pag. 87.

(o) Pag. 222.

lieues the same, and all other mysteries of Christian Fayth. Whether this tend not to Iudaisme, Turcisme, Paganisme, or Atheisme, and to the ouerthrow of all Christianity, I need not say.

7. Moreouer, who can oblige any vnderstanding man, to dye for auerring the Truth of that Fayth, wherof he proclaymes himselfe to haue no certainty? And you, O glorious Martyrs of Christ our Lord, did rather spill, then shed your bloud, if you were so prodigall therof, for a truth not certainly believed to be such. This is the very same argument, which meltifluous S. *Bernard* brings against *Petrus Abailardus*, a Progenitour of the *Socinians*, who in those dayes taught, that Christian *Fayth* was but *opinion*, and not infallibly certaine: (p) *Stulti ergo Martyres nostri* (sayth this Saint) *sustinentes tam acerba propter incerta, nec dubitantes sub dubio remunerationis præmio duruum per exitum diuturnum inire exitium.* S. *Paul* sayth, (q) *Scarce for a iust man doth any dye*. And we may say, who will giue his life for a Truth? and most of all, who will not only *giue* his life, but thinke himselfe *bound* vnder paine of eternall damnation to lay it downe in testimony of that, which for ought he certainly knowes, may prooue to be an vniust, and vntrue thing? Was the precious bloud of Christ our Lord, which by infinite degrees excelled that of Martyrs, shed in such abundance for purchasing probabilities? or for the impetration of Grace, to enable his seruants to dye for the truth of things, which in fine they esteemed but probable?

(p) *Epist.* 190.

(q) *Rom.* 5. 7.

8. Far be it from the harts of Christians to believe, and their tongues to professe, that a God of infinite wise-

wisedome and goodnesse, would oblige himselfe to reward men with euerlasting happines, for imbracing the mysteries of Christian Fayth, which may once proue false, and to adiudge men to endles torments, for adhering to the contrary, which in the end may be found true, if Christian Fayth can possibly be false, as false it may be, if it be but probable.

9. Neuer could any doctrine be offered to the sonnes of Adam more plausible, then that our beliefe of Heauen and Hell is but an opinion in it selfe, and no way certayne, concerning things of another world; whereas worldly pleasures, are in present possession and certaine. If the greatest certainty wherewith all Christians hitherto haue believed their fayth to abound, hath not byn able to stay the cariere of mens licenciousnesse, what shall we now expect, but, that flattered by this doctrine, they, who before did runne, will now fly, after the Idols of whatsoeuer may appeare to their soules or bodies, obiects of delight?

10. No lesse liberty doth this doctrine affoard for believing, then it doth for liuing, giuing scope to Apostasyes, and endlesse changes of Religions, as this man's fourefold alteration makes manifest, if all be true which is reported of him. In which inconstancy notwithstanding he seemes to glory, stiling it (r) *his Constancy in following that way to heauen, which for the present seemes to him the most probable*. But of this more hereafter.

(r) Prefa. n. 5.

11. I will doe him the fauour to suppose that he holds no Religion more certainly true then that of Christians, which yet to him being not certaine, what remaines in his persuasion and *doctrine*, but that

for matters of fayth and Religion, God hath prouided no certainty on earth? which is not only of very ill consequence, as I haue said, amongst Christians themselues, but expoſeth Christian Religion to contempt among the enemies thereof, and disbelieuers of it: which this man it ſeemes doth not value a hayre: but meaſuring euery body by himſelfe, taxeth Christians generally to be of the like weakenes, vngroundednes, & vnſetlednes in their beliefe: *For*, ſayth (s) he, *men may talke their pleaſure of an abſolute & moſt infallible certainty, but did men generally believe, that obedience to Chriſt were the only way to preſent and eternall felicity, but as firmely and vndoubtedly, as that there is ſuch a Citty as Conſtantinople, but as much as Cæſars Commentaries or the hiſtory of Saluſt. I believe the liues of moſt men both Papiſts and Proteſtants would be better then they are.* I leaue the Cenſure of this Doctrine to others: I only note, firſt how poore a conceit this man himſelfe hath, & endeauoureth to inſtill into others of the ground or adheſion, which Christians vndoubtedly haue in their beliefe, making it no more ſolid or firme, then the beliefe of Cæſars Commentaries &c. And ſecondly that it may perchance be his fortune to be really forbidden to write any more bookes, if he can make no better conſequences, then to conclude the want of *Fayth*, or *firmeneſſe of Fayth* in Christians, from the faults in their liues, ſeeing there may be in a manner infinite other cauſes, why they do not liue, as they moſt firmely believe they ſhould. (s) Pag. 327. n. 5.

12. This therefore, you ſee is his *doctrine* concerning *Chriſtian Fayth*; that it is weake, and weakely grounded; that it is reſolued into the authority of men, as

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the beliefe of Constantinople, and Cæsars Commentaries; that a Christian may really and deliberatly doubt of the points of his fayth, and yet be a Christian (that is) faythfull. But that which doth most manifestly discouer the impiety of this doctrine, and of this his manner of arguing, is, that the reasons by which he pretends to maintayne it, induce plaine Atheisme, that is, they conclude as well, that men can haue no certaine beliefe, knowledge, or assent that there is a God, or that we are *certaine*, that *Christian Fayth* is euen so much as *probable*; which now I am going to shew.

## *The Grounds of this Doctrine leade to Atheisme.*

## CHAP. II.

1. I Said in the former Chapter that if a Christian be not certaine that his beliefe is true, he may according to this mans owne cõfession doubt whether it be not falle. I pleaded his Confession vpon an Argument of his which perhaps seemed to him a great subtilty, and hard to be answered, but is indeed a meere toye, and if it prooue any thing, it prooues the Title of this Chapter to be true. *If*, sayth he (t) *this Doctrine*, of the absolute certainty of Christian Fayth *were true, then seeing not any the least doubting can consist with a most infallible certainty, it will follow, that every least doubting in any matter of Fayth though resisted and inuoluntary, is a damnable sinne, absolutly declineing, so long as it lasts, of all true, and saving Fayth.*

(t) Pag. 336.

Doth

doth not this Sophisme send also to preach, that if one be tempted with *involuntary* doubts against the Truths I spake of, he must forfeit his *certainty* that there is a God, or that Christian Fayth is *certainly* probable, and so either incurre damnation without his owne fault, which is impossible, or attaine heauen without any certaine beliefe or knowledge that there is a God, or that Christian Fayth is *certainly* probable.

3. As for the argument it selfe, it is of no moment. It doth not distinguish betwixt the *Habit* of Fayth, whereby Christians are permanently denominated *Faithfull*, and which remaines euen when we are a sleepe, and the *Act* or exercise thereof, which may be hindred by many good employments, as study or serious attention to any businesse, without the least preiudice to the *Habit* of which we are depriued only by *Voluntary* errours or doubts against it, not by those which are *involuntary* and *resisted*. If this answere giue not satisfaction, let him either afford a better against his owne obiection, or else professe, that he doth not certainly beleeue there is a God, or that he is not certaine, that Christian Fayth and Religion is so much as *probable*. And by the way me thinks he should reflect, that if he thinke *euery Act* destroyes the *contrary habit*, and in that respect no *doubting* may consist with the habit of infallible fayth, then the Doctrine of Catholicke Diuines, that euery voluntary Act of Heresy or Infidelity is destructiue of the habit of *Fayth*, should not in reason and true consequence be scarmed by him (v) *A vaine and groundlesse fancy.* (v) Pag. 160.

4. Another argument to proue the fallibility of

(w) P4. 316. Christian *Fayth*, in effect is this: (w) We pray for the increase and strengthning of our *Fayth*: Therefore our *Fayth* is not *infallible*. You might as well argue: We may pray for a high degree of happines in heauen: Therefore euery Saint in heauen is not perfectly happy. Do you not know, that there may be intension of degrees, euen in qualities which haue no mixture of the contrary? No light includes darknes, yet one light may be greater then another. Thus the most imperfect acte of fayth, is *most certaine* in the most perfect *kind* of certainty, though not most *certaine* in the most perfect *degree* of certainty: and we may well beleeue that the least degree of *Christian Fayth* is incompatible with any deliberate and not resisted doubt, or vncertainty, and yet pray for the increase thereof. If you deny this, then tell me whether you may not pray for the increase of your beliefe of a God, and his Attributes, and for the strengthning of it against all temptations (rising either from the suggestions of the enemy, or from the weakenesse of mans vnderstanding in order to so high misteryes) as also of *your certainty* that Christian Religion is probable in the higest degree of probability; and when you haue granted that you may, as I hope you will, then you will haue answered your owne argument, vnlesse you will acknowledge your selfe not to be *certaine* that there is a God, or that Christian Religion is probable.

4. A third reason wherby he endeauours to prooue that *Christian Fayth* is not absolutely *certaine*, is this in substance: That seeing, as *S. Iohn* assures vs, (x) *our Fayth is the victory which ouercomes the world*; if our

(x) P4. 206.

Fayth

Fayth be a certaine infallible knowledge, our victory ouer the world must of necessity be perfect, and it should be impossible for any true believer to commit any deliberate sinne; How this doth follow I cannot perceiue, no more then one can inferre that Christians cannot commit as grieuous sinnes as men that reiect Christianity, because the beliefe of Christians is true, and the beliefe of others is false. The Angels in heauen and Adam in Paradise, were indued with infallible Fayth, yea and with Euidence, in the opinion of diuers good Diuines; and yet the Angels and Adam sinned deliberatly, and damnably. Fayth doth direct, but not necessitate the will, which still remayning free, may choose good or euill. If he will still maintayne the argument for good, then he must be conuinced to say, that he doth not with *certainty* beleiue a God, or that vertue is to be imbraced, because he can doubtlesse commit deliberate sinnes against God, and vertue.

5. Not vnlike to this is another reason, (y) That *Charity* being the effect of *Fayth*, if our *Fayth* were perfect, *Charity* would be perfect, & so no man could possibly make any progresse in it. Giue me leaue to speake to your selfe; do you not see, that by this reason, if you beleiue in God with certainty, your loue of God must be perfect without possibility to make any progresse in it; which because it is false, it must follow, by force of your Argument, that you do not with certainty beleiue a God. But as for the reason in it selfe, because it concernes more then your selfe, I must tell you that it doth falsly suppose that *Charity* is both an immediate, and necessary effect of *Fayth*,

(y) *Ibid.*

without intervention of *Freewill*, which may refuse to follow the direction of Fayth, and either wholy ceaſe to loue God, or loue him, now more, now leſſe. And therefore no wonder, if vpon a falſe ſuppoſall, that follow which is alſo falſe.

6. This is not a time to enter into long diſcourſes, how you confound *certainty* with *perfection*, as if becauſe Fayth is abſolutely *certaine*, but yet *obſcure*, it muſt be alſo abſolutely *perfect*, which is a great miſtake, for it wants the perfection of *euidence*, & hath a *poſſibility* annexed to it, that it may be both reſiſted, and reiected. But it will not be vnpleaſant notwithſtanding, nor vntimely to ſtand a while, and ſee how exceſſiuely confident you are of the ſtrength and force of the foreſaid Arguments, and the contentment which you take in them. Thus you ſpeake of them: (z) *Theſe you ſee are ſtrange and portentous conſequences, and yet the deduction of them is cleere and apparent, which ſhewes this doctrine of yours* (you meane our doctrine of the infallibility of Chriſtian Fayth) *which you would faine haue true, that there might be ſome neceſſity of your Churches infallibility, to be indeed plainly repugnant, not only to Truth, but euen to all Religion and piety, and fit for nothing but to make men negligent of making any progreſſe in Fayth, or Charity. And therefore I muſt intreat and adiure you, either to diſcouer vnto me* (*which I take God to witneſſe I cannot perceiue*) *ſome fallacy in my reaſons againſt it, or neuer hereafter open your mouth in defence of it.* I anſwere, it ſeemes to me, that your *reaſons* are already ſufficiently proued to be *fallacyes*, ſince from them either nothing can be deduced for your purpoſe, or elſe you muſt acknowledge your ſelfe

(z) Pag. 326. 327.

selfe to haue no *certainty* that there is a God, that vertue is to be imbraced, or that Christian *Fayth* is euen probable.

7. And yet I adde, that you must in another respect also solue your owne obiections. Remember these your words: (zz) Yet all *This I say now, as if I doubted that the spirit of God being inquired by deuout, and humble prayer, and sincere obedience, may and will by degrees aduance his seruants higher, and giue them a certainty of adherence, beyond their certainty of euidence.* And elswhere: (a) *Gods spirit if he please may work more, a certainty of adherence beyond certainty of euidence.* Now you cannot deny but that these men may be tempted against their Fayth by *inuoluntary doubting*, that they may increase in it, that they may commit some deliberat sinne, and may make daily progresse in Charity and good workes, euen by the greater increase of their Fayth: and yet you graunt them a certainty of adherence, beyond their certainty of euidence. And so in this case your selfe must answere your owne arguments, and confesse them to be but fallacies. Euen your maine reason, that Christian *Fayth* can be endued with no stronger certainty then the probable motiues on which it relyes, by this selfe same instance is proued a *Sophisme*. For now you grant a *certainty* of Fayth not without probable arguments of credibility, yet not for them, it being more certaine then they are; and therefore you are still put vpon a necessity of answering your owne arguments. And whereas pag. 330. you make a shew of answering this particuler obiection, really you do not answere, but plainly contradict your self, labouring to proue that it is impos-

(zz) Pag. 36. 37.

(a) Pag. 312.

sible that there should be a certainty of adherence beyond the certainty of euidence, as the Reader may cleerly see, and shall be demonstrated in due time.

3. One thing more I must not let passe, and it is, That whereas you say, We would fayne haue Christian Fayth beleeued to be infallible, *that there might be some necessity of our Churches infallibility*; it seemes you are apt inough to yield infallibility to Gods Church, if once it be granted that Christian Fayth is infallible. And with good reason. For seeing you teach that vniuersall Tradition and other arguments of credibility, cannot produce an infallible beliefe of holy Scripture, and of the mysteries beleeued by Christians; it must follow, that some other infallible meanes must be found out for the propounding to vs the holy Scriptures: which other infallible meanes euen according to your persuasion, being not Scripture it selfe, nor euery mans priuate spirit, there remaynes only the authority of the Catholicke Church, which as an instrument of the holy Ghost, may be an infallible propounder both of Scripture and all diuine verities. Wherein there is a large difference betweene the Church and other Iudges. These in their sentences or determinations intend not to deliuer points of *infallible Fayth*, as the Church must intend, and doe it, if once it be granted, that from her we must receiue holy Scriptures, and beleeue them with a certaine and *infallible* assent of Christian *Fayth*.

The

# The second Doctrine.

## That the assurance which we have of Scriptures, is but morall.

## CHAP. III.

1. THis man magnifies holy Scriptures in many places, as the only thing on which he relyes his Saluation; but whosoeuer shall walke along with him from place to place, & marke well his wayes, will find that they lead to the quite contrary, and shew that he neither doth value them to their right worth, nor doth lay any other grounds, but such as are more apt to breed diseteeme then esteeme of them. This may be seene, in that he teacheth, (b) That our assurance that the Scripture hath been preserued from any materiall alteration, and that any other booke of any profane writer is incorrupted, *is of the same kind and condition, both morall assurances.* (b) Pag. 141. & 162.

2. If this may be allowed, it must necessarily follow that the assurance which we haue of Scripture must in degree be much inferiour to the assurance which we haue of such bookes of prophane Authors, as haue a more full testimony and tradition of all sorts of men, to wit, Atheists, Pagans, Iewes, Turkes & Christians; wheras the bookes of holy Scripture, are either vnknowne, or impugned by all except Chri-

Christians, & by some also who would beare the name of Christians, and consequently the morall assurance of them, and of the incorruptednesse of them, is the much the lesse, and of lesse morall credit. And by the same reason whosoeuer builds vpō this mans grounds, cannot haue so great assurance that there was a Iesus Christ, that he had disciples, and much lesse that he wrought wonderous things, and lesse then this, that those wonders were true miracles; as that there was a Cæsar, Alexander, Pompey &c. or that they fought such battailes, and the like. For those things deriued to vs by a more vniuersall tradition, then the former. Do not your selfe speake thus? *We haue as great reason to beleeue there was such a man as Henry the Eight King of England, as that Iesus Christ suffered vnder Pontius Pilate.* You should haue said; we haue greater reason to beleeue it, if we consult humane inducements only, and consequently if Christian Fayth be not absolutely infallible, euen aboue the motiues of credibility, we are more certaine that there was a King *Henry*, then a *Iesus Christ*: A thing which no true Christian can heare without detestation.

(e) Pag. 116.

3. That which followes out of the same 116. page, is of the like nature, laying a ground for vnwary people to reiect Scripture; For, hauing spoken of some barbarous Nations, that beleeued the doctrine of Christ, and yet beleeued not the Scripture to be the word of God, (d) for they neuer heard of it, and *Fayth comes by hearing*; you adde these words: *Neither doubt I, but if the bookes of Scripture had byn proposed to them by the other parts of the Church where they had been before receiued, and had been doubted of, or euen resisted by those*

(d) Pag. 116.

Chri-

*barbarous nations, but still by the bare beliefe, and profession of Christianity they might be saued, God requiring of vs vnder paine of damnation, only to beleeue the verities therein contained, and not the diuine authority of the bookes wherein they are contained.*

4. If this be granted, why might not any Church haue reiected the Scriptures being proposed by other parts of the Church? And why may not we do so at this day? Nay seeing *de facto* we know the verities of Christian Fayth by Scripture only, according to your doctrine; we cannot be obliged to beleeue the Scriptures, because the verities therein contained are necessary to be beleeued, (for this very necessity you cannot beleeue, but by beleeuing aforehand the Scripture) but contrarily you may reiect the verities themselues, if you be not preobliged to beleeue the diuine authority of the bookes wherein they are contained.

5. Againe, you say that Scripture is the *only Rule* of Christian Fayth, (e) yet it is not necessary to Saluation to beleeue it *to be a rule of Fayth, no nor to be the word of God.* The first part of this doctrine is the scope of your whole second Chapter. The second is taught purposely, and at large in the same Chapter (f) *pag.* 116. *n.* 159. Ioyne these two assertions, and the Conclusion will be; That we are not obliged to receiue that which is the only ordinary meanes of attayning Christian Fayth, namely the Scriptures. And therefore in the ordinary way, we cannot be bound to imbrace Christian Fayth, seeing it cannot be compassed without the meanes to attaine to it. For how can one be obliged to attayne an end, and yet be left free to reiect the only meanes of atchieuing that end? I am the

(e) *Cap.* 2. *per totum.*

(f) *Pag.* 116.

freer to make this question, because you concurre with me in the answere, when you say: (g) *It was necessary that God by his providence should preserue the Scripture from any vndiscernable corruption, in those things which he would haue knowne; otherwise it is apparent it had not been his will that these things should be knowne, the only meanes of continuing the Knowledge of them being perished.* Now is it not in effect all one, whether the Scripture haue perished, or whether it be preserued, if in the meane time we be not bound to belieue, that it is the Rule of Fayth, and word of God? Nay, seeing as things now stand we may find the verityes contayned in Scripture, sufficiently expressed in innumerable other bookes, we may at this present in conformity to your doctrine reiect all the holy Scripture, contenting our selues with the contents thereof taken from other Authors, and not from the writers of the Bible.

(g) Pag. 86.

6. The Doctrine which he carryeth through his whole Booke, but particularly insisteth vpon in his third Chapter, that we cannot learne from Scripture it selfe that it is Canonicall, but only from Tradition of men, deliuering it from hand to hand, is no lesse iniurious and derogatiue to holy Scripture then the former, speaking of men in his sense, that is, not as endued with any infallible assistance of the holy Ghost (which Catholicks belieue of the Church) but only as wise, or many men, or for the like human qualifications; for to this effect he sayth: (h) *Tradition is a principle, not in Christianity, but in Reason, not proper to Christians, but common to all men.* This is certainly the right course to blast the Authority of holy Scripture,

(h) Pag. 72, n. 51.

not

not to maintaine it. For beſides that which I haue touched already, that by this meanes we are not ſo certaine of Scripture, as of profane bookes, he muſt come at length to reſolue the beliefe of Scripture into the Tradition or Authority of Pagans, Iewes, Turkes, or condemned Hereticks, as well as of true Chriſtiás. For ſeeing errours againſt fayth, or Hereſies cannot in his principles be diſcerned but by Scriptures; before they be receaued, the teſtimony of one man concerning the admittance of them muſt weigh as much as of another, and be conſidered only as prooceeding from a number of men, be they faythfull or Infidels, true Chriſtians or condemned Hereticks.

7. And further according to the ſame principles he muſt acknowledge, that he belieueth ſome parts of Canonicall Scripture with a more firme aſſent, then others, to wit, as they haue been deliuered with more or leſſe generall conſent, or haue been more or leſſe once queſtioned: which is to depriue Canonical Scripture of all Authority. For if once we giue way to more or leſſe in the behalfe of Gods word, we ſhall end in nothing. And this hath the more force in this mans doctrine, who profeſſeth that the greateſt certainty which he hath of any part of Scripture, is within the compaſſe of probability. What certainty then ſhall thoſe Scriptures haue, which participate of that probability in a leſſe and leſſe degree, according as they haue been deliuered with different tradition and conſent. How this doctrine will ſound in the eares of all true Chriſtians, I leaue to be conſidered, contenting my ſelfe to oppoſe your Aſſertion with the diſcourſe of *D. King*, afterward Biſhop of *London*, in the begin-

beginning of his *first Lecture* vpon *Ionas*, where amongst other things he sayes: *Comparisons betwixt Scripture and Scripture are both odious and dangerous. The Apostles names are euenly placed in the Writings of the holy foundation. With an vnpartiall respect haue the children of Christs family from time to time, receiued, reuerenced, & imbraced the whole volume of Scriptures.* You on the other side speake in a different straine and say thus: (i) *I may belieue euen those questioned Bookes to haue been written by the Apostles, and to be Canonicall: but I cannot in reason belieue this of them so vndoubtedly, as of those bookes which were neuer questioned.* And elswhere: *The Canon of Scripture, as we receiue it, is built vpon vniuersall Tradition. For we do not professe our selues so absolutely and vndoubtedly certaine, neither do we vrge others to be so, of those Bookes which haue byn doubted, as of those which neuer haue.* By this meanes what will become of the Epistle of *S. Iames*, the second Epistle of *S. Peter*, the second and third of *S. John*, the Epistle to the *Hebrewes*, and the *Apocalyps of S. Iohn*? And what part of Scripture hath not been questioned by some, and those some so many, as would haue made vs doubt of the works of *Tully* or *Liuy &c.* if they had affirmed them not to haue been written by such Authours? And the only doubting of *Erasmus*, or some such other about the workes of some Fathers, hath caused them to be questioned by diuers, vpon much weaker grounds, as difference of stiles, or the like.

(i) Pag. 67. n. 36.

(k) Pag. 69. n. 45.

8. In another place you tell vs (l) that to receiue a Booke for Canonicall, it is inough to haue *had attestation though not vniuersall, yet at least sufficient to make considering men receiue them for Canonicall, which were some-*

(l) Pag. 68. n. 43.

*sometimes doubted of by some, yet whose number and authority was not so great, as to preuaile against the contrary suffrages*. Obserue vpon what inextricable passages, and lesse degrees of probability this man doth purue in our beliefe of holy Scripture. First we must settle our Fayth on *men*; then on *considering* men, though the consent be not vniuersall; thirdly vpon the greater and more preualent number and authority of suffrages, as if the greater number alone, without infallible assistance of the holy Ghost, were a sufficient ground for Christian Fayth. You deny (pag. 68. n. 42.) that the Controuersy about Scripture is to be tryed by most voyces, and yet what is your greater number, but most voyces? And as for greater *Authority*, what can you meane thereby, except perhaps greater learning, or some such quality, nothing proportionable to that *Authority*, on which Christian Fayth must relye?

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# The third Doctrine.

*That the Apostles were not infallible in their writings, but erred with the whole Church of their time.*

## CHAP. IIII.

1. IT can be no wonder that he should speake meanly of the necessity, and infallibility of holy Scripture, since he labours to fasten errour vpon the Canonicall writers, and deliuerers thereof the *Apostles* themselues, and the *whole Church*

of their time. And this cõcerning an Article of Fayth of higheſt conſequence and moſt frequently reuealed in holy Scripture, the deniall whereof had byn moſt derogatory from the glory of our Sauiour, and from the abundant fruit of his ſacred Paſsion: to wit, that the Ghoſpell was to be preached to all nations. You ſhall receiue it in his owne words: (m) *The Church may ignorantly disbeliene a Reuelation, which by errour ſhe thinkes to be no Reuelation. That the Goſpell was to be preached to all Nations, was a Truth reuealed before our Sauiours Aſcenſion in theſe words; Goe and teach all nations. Math. 29. 19. Yet through preiudice, or inaduertence, or ſome other cauſe the Church disbelieued it, as it is apparent out of the 11. and 12. Chapter of the Acts, vntill the conuerſion of Cornelius.* And that the Apoſtles themſelues were inuolued in this ſuppoſed errour of the moſt primitiue Church, he deliuers without ceremony in another place: (n) *That the Apoſtles themſelues euen after the ſending of the holy Ghoſt were, and through inaduertence, or preiudice continued for a time, in an errour repugnant to a reuealed Truth, it is, as I haue already noted, vnanſwerably euident from the ſtory of the Acts of the Apoſtles.* Is not this to ouerthrow all Chriſtianity? If the Bleſſed Apoſtles on whom Chriſtians are builded, as vpon their foundation (*Epheſ.* 2.) were obnoxious to *inaduertence*, to *preiudice*, to *other cauſes* of errour; what certainty can we now haue? The Apoſtles might haue written what they beliened, and ſo we cannot be ſure but what they haue written may contain ſome errour proceeding from *inaduertence*, *preiudice*, or ſome other cauſe. If they euen after the receiuing of the holy Ghoſt, and with them the whole

(m) Pag. 85. n. 21.

(n) Pag. 144. n. 3.

Church

Church of that time, could either forget or transgresse so fresh a Commaund, impoſed by our Sauiour Chriſt for his laſt farewell at his Aſcenſion; it will be obuious for aduerſaries of Chriſtian Religion to obiect, that perhaps they haue byn left to themſelues, to obliuion, inaduertence, and other humane defects in penning the Scripture. If they erred in their firſt thoughts, why not in their ſecond? With the aſsiſtance of the holy Ghoſt they can erre in neither, without it, in both.

2. The Obiection which he brings is not hard to ſolue. *S. Peter* himſelfe neuer doubted. That viſion was ſhewed to him, and he declared it to the conuerted Iewes for their ſatisfaction, as it happened in the Councell held by the Apoſtles, about the obſeruation of the law of *Moyſes*; which ſome Chriſtians conuerted from Iudaiſme did much vrge. But neither the Apoſtles, nor the other Chriſtians had any doubt in that matter: as likewiſe in our preſent caſe, not all the Church, but only ſome Zealous for the Iewes did oppoſe themſelues to *S. Peter*. For before the conuerſion of *Cornelius* other Gentils were become Chriſtians, as (o) *Cornelius à Lapide* with others affirmes & proues. For which reſpect the text expreſsely declares, (p) that they who were offended with *S. Peter were of the circumciſion*, that is Iewes made Chriſtians.

(o) *Com. in Act. cap.* 10. *poſt verſ.* 48.

(p) *Act. c.* 11. *v.* 2.

3. He goes on in this conceit, and addes a point no leſse daungerous then the former. *The Apoſtles Doctrine*, ſayth he, (q) *was confirmed by miracles, therefore it was entirely true, and in no part either falſe, or vncertain. I ſay in no part which they deliuered conſtantly, as a certaine diuine truth, and which had the atteſtation of diuine miracles.*

(q) *Pag.* 144. *n.* 31.

cles. Thus you see he couertly calls in question all the Apostles writings, and layes grounds to except against them. For if once we giue way to such distinctions, and say that the Apostles are to be credited only, in what they *deliuered constantly as a certaine diuine Truth*; we may reiect in a manner all Scripture, which scarce euer declares, whether or no the writers thereof did deliuer any thing, as a certaine diuine Truth; and much lesse that they remained constant in what they deliuered by writing. Or if it should expresse these particulars, yet we could not be obliged to belieue it, if once we come to deny to the Apostles an vniuersall infallibility. For what reason can this man giue, according to these grounds of his, why they might not haue erred in that particular declaration?

4. And besides, will he not oblige vs to belieue with certainty any thing deliuered by the Apostles which had not *the attestation of diuine miracles*? It seemes he will not, and thereby in effect takes away the beliefe of very many mysteries of Christian Fayth and verities contayned in holy Scripture. For that miracles were wrought in confirmation of euery particular passage of Scripture, we cannot affirme neither out of holy Scripture it selfe, nor any other credible argument: rather the contrary is certaine, there being innumerable verityes of the Bible which were neuer seuerally confirmed in that manner, and yet it were damnable sinne to deny them. And moreouer where, or when did the Apostles particularly prooue by miracle, that their writings were the word of God? Thus you see into what plunges he brings all Christians by his owne *Inconstancy*; from which certainly ariseth

this

this itching desire of his to put conceites into mens heades, as if the Apostles also might haue byn various in their writings and not constant.

5. I cannot omit another distinction preiudiciall to the infallibility of the Apostles & of their writings, which he deliuereth in these words: (r) *For those things which the Apostles professed to deliuer, as the Dictates of humane reason, and prudence, and not as diuine Reuelations, why should we take them as diuine Reuelations? I see no reason nor how we can do so, and not contradict the Apostles and God himselfe. Therefore when S. Paul sayes in the 1. Epist. to the Corinth. 7. 12. To the rest speake I, not the Lord. And againe: Concerning virgins I haue no commaundment of the Lord, but I deliuer my iudgment. If we will pretend that the Lord did certainly speake what S. Paul spake, and that his iudgment was Gods commandment, shall we not plainly contradict S. Paul, and that spirit by which he wrote which moued him to write; as in other places diuine Reuelations, which he certainly knew to be such, so in this place his owne Iudgment touching some things, which God had not particularly reuealed vnto him.* This doctrine is subiect to the same iust exceptions, which were alleadged against the former. For if once we deny vniuersall infallibility to the Apostles, we cannot belieue them with infallibility in any one thing, but still we may be doubting whether they speake out of their owne spirit, and not by diuine Reuelation, though they should euen declare in what sort they intend to speake, because we may feare they are deceiued in those very declarations. And as you will perhaps say, they write Diuine Reuelations, except in things which they professe to deliuer *as the Dictates of humane*

(r) Pag. 144. & 32.

*human reason and prudence*; another will say that they must or may be vnderstood to deliuer *the dictats of human reason and prudence*, whensoeuer they do not in expresse tearmes professe to deliuer diuine Reuelations, which is very seldome; the ordinary custome of holy Scripture being to deliuer verityes without any such qualifying of them. And if *S. Paul* when in the Epistle and Chapter by you cited *v.* 40. sayes of himselfe, *I thinke that I also haue the spirit of God*, might be deceiued in that thought of his; we may also say he might be deceiued, euen when he affirmes that he writes by the spirit of God; and much more may we doubt, when he expresses no such thing, as commonly neither he, nor any other Canonicall writers doe.

6. In the words which you cite: *To the rest speake I, not the Lord, S. Paul* treates of a very important matter, that is, of the wiues departing from her husband, or the husbands from his wife. Wherein if *S. Paul* were subiect to errour, he might chance to haue taught a point of great Iniustice, against the commaund of our Sauiour declaring the very Law of nature, *What God hath ioyned together let not man sepa-*
(s) *Mat.* *rate* (s). And as for the words you alleadge in the se-
19. 6. cond place: *Concerning virgins I haue no commandment of our Lord, but I deliuer my Iudgment*, the Apostle afterwards within the compasse of the selfe same discourse, sayes that a man sinnes not if he marry; wherin if *S. Paul* may be deceiued, as speaking out of his owne spirit, as you say he doth in some precedent words; you will not only want this text to proone with certainty, that marriage is lawfull, but whensoeuer marriage is allowed in any other place of

Scrip-

Scripture (as *Hebr.* 13. *v.* 4. *Marriage is honourable in all*) you haue put into the mouthes of the old and moderne heretiques, who impugned the lawfullnes of marriage, a ready answere that those texts of Scripture, were but the Dictats of human reason and prudence, wherein the writers of Canonicall Scripture might be deceiued.

7. The other words, *Speake I, not the Lord*, shew only that our Sauiour left power for the Apostles, and his Church to aduise, counsaile, ordaine, or commaund some things, as occasion might require, which himselfe had not commaunded, or determined in particular: which truth if you hold to be only a *Dictate of human reason*, you open a way for refractary spirits to oppose the ordinances of their Superiours and Prelats, in things not expressely commaunded by our Lord.

8. The last Words *v.* 25. *Concerning virgins I haue no commandment of the Lord, but I deliuer my Iudgment*, which we translate, *but I giue counsaile*, prooue indeed our Catholicke Doctrine concerning workes of supererogation, or Counsayles, in regard that the Apostle in this place persuades virginity as the better, but commaunds it not as necessary: Yet they do in no wise imply any doubtfulnesse or fallibility in the Apostles; neuer any hitherto besides your selfe, offering to answere our argumēt by saying, the Apostle wrote only the dictate of human reason, or prudence, and so might be deceiued. Which answere had been very obuious, if they had presumed to be so bold, as you are, with the Apostles, and therefore it is a signe that no man besides your selfe durst deliuer this doctrine.

9. Certainly if the Apoſtles did ſometimes write by the motion of the holy Ghoſt, and at other times out of their owne priuate Iudgment or ſpirit; though it were granted that themſelues could diſcerne the diuerſity of thoſe motions or ſpirits (which one may eaſily deny, if their vniuerſall infallibility be once impeached) yet it is cleere that others, to whom they ſpake or wrote, could not diſcerne the diuerſity of thoſe ſpirits in the Apoſtles. For which cauſe learned Proteſtants acknowledge, that although each mans priuate ſpirit were admitted for direction of himſelfe, yet it were not vſefull for teaching others. Thus you ſay (pag. 141.) A ſupernaturall aſſurance of the incorruption of Scripture may be an aſſurance to ones ſelfe, *but no argument to another*. And as you affirme (t) *that bookes that are not Canonicall may ſay they are, and thoſe that are ſo, may ſay nothing of it*: ſo we cannot be aſſured that the Apoſtles deliuer diuine Reuelations, though they ſhould ſay they doe; nor that they deliuer not ſuch Reuelations though they ſay nothing thereof, if once we deny their vniuerſall infallibility.

(t) Pag. 62.

10. Now I beſeech the good Reader to reflect vpon this mans endeauours to ouerthrow the holy Scriptures and Chriſtianity, and to what at laſt he tends by theſe degrees. *Firſt* he ſayth, our beliefe that Scripture is the word of God exceedes not probability. 2. Amongſt thoſe Bookes which we belieue to be the word of God, we belieue ſome with leſſe probability then others. Thirdly we may be ſaued though we neither belieue that Scripture is the Rule of Fayth, nor that it is the word of God. Fourthly, our aſſurance that Scripture or any other Booke is corrupted, is of

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the same kind and condition, both *only mortall seruantes*. Fifthly the writers of holy Scripture might erre in things which they deliuered not constantly, or not as diuine Reuelations, but dictates of humane reason, or if they deliuered any doctrine not confirmed by miracles. Sixtly, vpon the same ground he might say that the Apostles were infallible only when they deliuered things belonging to Fayth, Piety, or Religion, & not when they wrote things meerely indifferent, or of no great moment in themselues, as some *Socinians* (u) either grant, or care not much to deny. And then further it will be left to euery mans iudgement, what is to be accounted a matter of moment: And soone after it will be said, that to search whether the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, for example, be contained in Scripture, or no, is not much necessary; since a man without knowledge of that speculatiue doctrine, may beliue and loue God, as a chiefe *Socinian* teaches (w), and your selfe affirme (x) *that any Fayth if it worke by loue shall certainly auaile with God, and be accepted of him*. And then will some say, Why may not a man loue *God* though he erre in the doctrine concerning *Christ* deliuered in Scripture? & so it will not be necessary to beliue that the Apostles were infallible in penning the Scripture, but only in articles absolutely necessary to loue God, and to haue a generall sorrow for all our sinnes. And since to loue God & haue contrition for our sinnes, a probable beliefe will serue according to your (y) Principles, what need we any infallible Scripture at all, but only some motiues sufficient to produce a probable assent that there is a God, whether it be by Scripture

(u) *Volkel. l. 5. c. 5. Dom. Lopez. de Authorit. sac. Script.*

(w) *Iren. Philaleth. dissertatione de Pace Ecclesiæ.*

(x) *Pag. 37.*

(y) *Pag. 327.*

beleeued to be only a probable writing, or by naturall discourse, or any other meanes, as you teach, that one is not bound to beleeue the Scripture to be the word of God, but may be saued, if by other meanes, for example, preaching, he attaine the knowledge of the verityes contayned in Scripture (z). And thus you see to what hauock these things lead, not only touching Christianity, but of all Religion.

(z) Pag. 116.

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# The fourth Doctrine.

## Iniurious to the miracles of our Saviour, and of his Apostles.

## CHAP. V.

1. THE Disciple is not aboue his Mayster: & we may not wonder that a man should be free with the Apostles, if he spare not Christ himselfe. To the end that the entrance might be proportionable to the building which he was raising, he plants in his Preface a Tenet, which cannot but be as strange to all considerate Christians, as it is dangerous to the weake. It seemes he was not able to deny, that true miracles haue been wrought by members of our Catholicke Church: He comes therefore to this desperate euasion, and giues vs these wordes in print: (a) *It seemes to me no strange thing, that God in his Iustice should permit some true miracles to be wrought to delude them who haue forged so many, as apparently the Professours of the Roman doctrine haue to abuse the world.*

(a) Prof. p. 43.

I shall

I shall wrong the Readers vnderstanding, if for his sake I shall stand to dilate vpon that, which is very cleer; that by this meanes the miracles of our Blessed Sauiour, and his Apostles cannot be knowne to be inducements to truth, but may haue been snares to entrap the beholders in pernicious errours. To what end then doth *S. Paul* prooue his mission by miracles? (b) *Signa Apostolatus mei facta sunt super vos, in omni prudentia, in signis, & prodigijs & virtutibus*. To what end did our Blessed Sauiour assigne miracles, to confirme the preaching of his Apostles? *Signa autem eos, qui crediderint, hæc sequentur: In nomine meo dæmonia eijcient &c.* (c). To what purpose did he send this message to *S. Iohn Baptist*, *Cæci vident, claudi ambulant* (d)? To what end did he say (e) *si opera non fecissem in eis, quæ nemo alius fecit, peccatum non haberent?*

(b) 2. Cor. 12. 12.

(c) Marc. vlt. v. 17.

(d) Matt. 11.

(e) Ioan. 15. 24.

2. Many other texts might be alledged. These will satisfy euery good Christian that belieues the Scriptures. But I confesse, neither these or any other places of Scripture can prooue any thing with this man, who by affirming that true miracles may be wrought to delude men, doth depriue the Apostles of all authority which they could gayne by working miracles, and consequently leaues men free from any obligation to belieue that their writings were infallible. And then to what purpose doth he tel vs in the same place, that the Bible hath byn *confirmed with those miracles, which were wrought by our Sauiour Christ and his Apostles*, since those very miracles might by the same ground, be delusions rather then confirmations? If true miracles may now be wrought in punishment of Christians for forging false miracles, as you pre-

tend;

tend; what certainty can you giue a man that our Sauiour & his Apostles did not the like, in punishment of the Iewes and Gentils for Idolatry, Irreligiousnesse and other grieuous sinnes, which are neuer wanting in the world, and may be punished in the manner you speake of, if once this assertion be admitted, that *True miracles may be wrought to delude men*?

3. But though by this impiety you depriue Scripture of all authority, and cannot consequently be perswaded to any thing by Scripture: yet there remaines one powerfull authority to conuince you euen in this your tenet. It is your selfe. For thus you speake to vs vpon another occasion: (f) *If you be so infallible, as the Apostles were, shew it as the Apostles did. They went forth* (sayth S. Marke) *and preached euery where, the Lord working with them, and confirming their words with signes following. It is impossible that God should lye, & that the eternall Truth should set his hand and seale to the confirmation of a falshood, or of such doctrine, as is partly true and partly false. The Apostles doctrine was thus confirmed, therefore it was intirely true, and in no part either false or vncertaine.* Is it not cleere by these words that since the Doctrine of the Roman Church hath byn confirmed by true miracles (as you affirmed in your Motiue, and for ought I can perceiue, deny it not in your answere) she must be the true Church? For euen against your selfe, when you speake not in opposition to the Roman Church, you confesse that the eternall Truth cannot confirme a falshood with true miracles. Or if in opposition to our Church you will recall what you deliuer in your Booke, and be constant to that which you say in your Preface in answere

(f) Pag. 144. & 145.

to

to your *Motiues*; I must still be enforced to affirme that you prepare a way to the ouerthrow of Christianity, by enacuating the efficacy of miracles wrought by Christ our Lord, his Apostles, and all holy men, in confirmation of Christian Religion.

4. And to the end the Reader may not thinke I am too rigorous in pressing you vpon this one passage, vpon which you were thrust by a hard necessity of answering your owne motiues; I challenge you vpon this other wherein you say: (g) *For my part I professe, that if the Doctrine of the Scripture were not as good, and as fit to come from the fountaine of goodnesse, as the miracles by which it was confirmed were great, I should want one maine pillar of my Fayth, and for want of it, I feare should be much staggered in it.* Catholickes are most certaine that the doctrine of the Scripture is as good, as the miracles by which it was confirmed were great. But this certainty we do not ground vpon our owne Knowledge or Iudgment, framed by considering the Doctrines in themselues, as if we should *be staggered* if we could not find them to be such independently of miracles; but, because they are confirmed by miracles, or otherwise testifyed to be good, by them, to whom we must submit: whereas your way of beliefe leaues a man in a disposition to be perpetually altering opinions, accordingly as the same things may sometimes appeare true, and other times false; which diuersity of iudgement you must according to this your doctrine follow, euen against any point confirmed by miracles, if it chance to seeme not true to your vnderstanding, which is the part and proper disposition of a Sectarie.

(g) Pag. 69. n. 47.

# The fifth Doctrine.

## *By resoluing Fayth into Reason, he destroyes the nature of Fayth and beliefe of all Christian verityes.*

## CHAP. VI.

1. THe source whence all the aforesaid and innumerable other pernicious sequels do follow, Gentle Reader, is, that according to this mans doctrine, *Christian Fayth* must be resolued into the euidence of naturall *reason*, not as preparing or inducing vs to belieue, but as the maine ground, & strongest pillar of our Fayth, and in a word, as the conclusion depends on the premises. And to this purpose he builds much vpon this axiome: (h) *We cannot possibly be more certaine of the conclusion, then of the weaker of the premises; as a riuer will not rise higher then the fountaine from which it flowes.* Hence in the same place he deduceth that the certainty of Christian *Fayth* can be but *morall*, and not absolutely *infallible*. With this principle is connexed another, vnlesse you will call it the same more expressely declared and applyed. And it is this: If vpon reasons seeming to my vnderstanding very good, I haue made choyce of a Guide or Rule for my direction in matters of Fayth; when afterward I discouer that this Guide or Rule leades me to belieue one or more points, which in the best iudgment that I can frame, I haue stronger reasons to reiect,

(h) Pag. 36. n. 4.

reiect, then I had to accept my former Rule; I may and ought to forsake that Rule as false & erroneous: otherwise I should be conuinced not to follow reason, but some setled resolution to hold fast whatsoeuer I had once apprehended. What followes from this vast principle, but that if holy Scripture (for example) propound things seeming more euidently cõtrary to reason, or my opinion, more plainly contradicting one another, then the inducements which first mooued me to belieue Scripture were strong & conuincing; I must reiect the Scripture, as an erroneous Rule, and adhere to my owne Reason and discourse as my last and safest guide. This certainly doth follow. Especially if we remember another principle that the motiues, for which we belieue holy Scripture, are only probable, for so they must in all equity giue place to reasons seeming demonstratiue & conuincing, as there will not want many such against the high misteries of Christian Fayth, if once we professe that our assent to them must be resolued into naturall discourse. How farre dissonant this is from the receiued persuasion and tenet of all Christians, that their Fayth is not resolued into Reason but Authority, it is easy to see by the effects. For why do *Socinians* and such like deny the misteryes of the Blessed Trinity, the Deity of our Blessed Sauiour, and diuers other veritys of Christian Fayth, but because they seeme manifestly repugnant to reason?

2. It cannot be doubted but that any one to whom the saluation of his owne soule is deare, will be wary in admitting doctrines deliuered in a Booke, if with Truth it may be affirmed, that the Author in point of be-

beliefe is certainly no good Christian, as one who denyes the Diuinity of Christ our Lord, and the most Blessed Trinity, which are misteryes most proper to Christian Fayth, and most hatefull to Iewes and Turkes. For what authority can he challenge with any iudicious Christian, in matters concerning Fayth, who confessedly errs in the prime articles of Christian Fayth? as we feare euen a sound man, if we chinke he come from the pest-house; and none will trust the Diuell though transfigured into an Angell of light. For which cause spirituall men bid vs examine, not only what motions we find in our soule, but also from what roote they proceed.

3. I wil not take vpõ me to say what you are, or what you are not, but in matters cõcerning articles of fayth we ought to speak plainly. You tell vs (1) that you beliue *the Doctrine of the Trinity, the Deity of our Saviour, and all other supernaturall veritys reuealed in Scripture.* The question is not, whether you beliue some kind of Trinity, nor whether our Saviour be God in some sense by participation, as Dauid sayes, *I haue said, you are Gods* (*Psal.* 81. 6.) and in that sense that they are conteyned in Scripture: But the question is whether you beliue those misteryes, as they are generally beliued by Christians, and expressed euen in the 39. *Articles* of the English Church: or whether you beliue that in this sense they are reuealed in Scripture. Be pleased then to declare your selfe, whether you beliue, that *in the Godhead there be three Persons of one substance, Power, and Eternity, the Father, the Sonne, and the Holy Ghost, as is taught in the first article.* And then whether you beliue the *second Article*, wherein is said:

(1) *Prefat. n.* 5.

said: *The Sonne which is the Word of the Father, the very and eternall God of one substance with the Father, tooke mans nature in the wombe of the Blessed Virgin, of her substance: So that two whole and perfect natures, that is to say, the Godhead and Manhood were ioyned together in one Person neuer to be deuided, whereof is one Christ very God, and very Man.* Thirdly, whether you firmely beleiue the contents of the fifth *Article: The holy Ghost proceeding from the Father and the Sonne, is of one substance, Maiesty, and Glory with the Father and the Sonne, very eternall God.* If these demaunds seeme harsh, blame your selfe who were forewarned, euen before that which they call the *Direction* was published, when it was in your power to haue freed your selfe from this trouble, and secured others from the scandall which your Booke may giue. Neither are these questions from the matter, but consequent to principles deliuered in your Booke.

4. And let no man wonder, that I desire plaine dealing. For I haue seene a *Socinian* Catechisme in print, which at first grants that Christ is God, but then to the question, whether he haue the *diuine Nature*, it answers, No: because (forsooth) that is a thing repugnant both to Scripture and Reason. It is apparent that the *Socinians* agree with the *Manicheans*, that *Fayth* is resolued into *Reason*; and that the *Manicheans* maintained a most strict brotherhood with the *Priscillianists*, who taught that it is lawfull to dissemble a mans Fayth euen by oath: For their saying was, *Iuret, periura, secretum prodere noli.* And *Arius*, who denied the Diuinity of our Saviour Christ, made no bones to forswear himselfe by a profession of Fayth,

contrary to his internall beliefe. And whether any one who is esteemed a *Socinian* do not hold it lawfull to deny, or speake ambiguously against what he believes, that so in a very peruerse sense he may with the Apostle, *become all to all*, it is likely you know better then another can tell you.

5. Howsoeuer, euery one doth now expect, that both for these and other manifest errours mentioned in that litle Booke of Direction, you openly declare your selfe; it being not sufficient to say, as you do, in a generall confused manner, (k) *Whosoeuer teaches, or holdes them, let him be Anathema.* For this vniuersality or collection of errours, in a confused sort, leaues an euasion to make good your speach, if you reiect but any one of those errours, though withall you imbrace the rest. And therefore to acquit your credit, and to take away scandal, it were your part to renounce ech one in particular. For if in any occasion, certainly in this, silence ought to be interpreted a confession of the said errours. *S. Hierome* is of this mind, when he sayes, (l) *Nolo in suspicione Hæreseos quemquam esse patientem, ne apud eos, qui ignorant innocentiam eius; dissimulatio conscientiæ iudicetur, si taceat.* If you be not guilty, I do you a singular fauour, in giuing you this fayre and fit occasion, to wipe of that publicke staine which report hath cast on you, and wherof you haue not only giuen too great occasion by your owne words in frequent Conferences, but now by your writings, which being published after the *Direction*, demonstrates how deeply *Socinian* errours are rooted both in your iudgment & affection, which could not be abated, either by priuate aduise, or publicke admonition.

(k) *Pref. n. 28.*

(l) *Ep. 75. adu. Vigilantium.*

6. But

6. But to returne from this necessary digression; This your resoluing Fayth into naturall Reason giues occasion for others at least, if your selfe be guiltlesse, to deny the Diuinity of our Sauiour Christ, and consequently to deny that he redeemed mankind by his Death; which if he be not true God, had beene (O blasphemy!) not a price for our Redemption, but a punishment rather of his either vsurping the name of the true Sonne of God, or at least for giuing men cause to belieue he did so. These I grant are harsh inferences, and yet you cannot auoyd them, so long as you limit Christian Fayth to probabilities, and resolue these into naturall discourse, as the *conclusion* into the *premises*. And giue me leaue to say, you do but dissemble to circumuent an vnwary Reader, when you say, (m) that you submit *all other reasons to this one. God hath said so: Therefore it is true*. For you conceale the maine point, which is, that you cannot know, that *God hath said so*, except by motiues of credibility, which can produce only a probable assent; and this must yield to the contrary, if it seeme euident by conuincing arguments, as *Socinians* conceiue their reasons against the Blessed Trinity, and the Deity of our Sauiour Christ, to be. The like I say of other high misteryes of Christian Fayth; and still must conclude, that vnder colour of vphoulding your cause you ouerthrow Christianity.

(m) *Pref. n.* 12.

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# The sixth Doctrine.

## Destructiue of the Theologicall Vertues of Christian Hope, and Charity.

## CHAP. VII.

1. THe grounds which he hath layd for the ouerthrow of *Christian Fayth*, doe by consequence ouerthrowe also Christian *Hope*, and *Charity*, and bring them downe to the ranke of ordinary *Morall* vertues. But not content with this, he hath other passages, in which he strikes more neere the roote, and deliuers doctrines which tend immediatly to the destruction of them. *It is*, sayth he, (n) *against reason and experience, that by the commission of any deadly sinne, the Habit of Charity is quite extirpated.* Reason and experience are his Guides, you see, in all the most supernaturall businesses of our soules. Reason and experience, as it seemes, do tell him, that euen when he is committing a mortall sinne, that is, infringing the commaundment of God in a matter of weight and moment, and in effect saying, I will not serue him; he is notwithstanding in Christian *Charity* with him, and his *humble seruant*. Christian *Charity*, as all Christians are taught, is a supernaturall infused *Habit*, whereby we doe loue and preferre God before all things, and are habitually inclined to it. When we do not preferre him before all things, but turne our selues to Creatures by some ouerweening affection

(n) Pag. 361.

sion to them, that act of commission or omission, if it be as I said Mortall, is not only to be considered as an Act, but as an Act killing the soule, and bereauing it of the life thereof, that is of *Charity*, whereby only we liue in God: and consequently the Infused Habit of *Charity* ceaseth in vs: howsoeuer we may find by experience some inclination still to loue God, either by some repetition of former acts of our owne, or reysed by some consideration represented to vs.

2. This is the doctrine receiued amōgst Christians, which I do not now vndertake to dispute, and declare at large, but reserue it for a larger worke, my intent in this being only to point out the heades from whence very ill consequences must needes follow, that people may take heed of them, and not be too greedy of such noueltyes, least together with them they sucke their euerlasting bane. For to goe no further, to what passe would this one doctrine bring a Common wealth or Kingdome if it were receaued? Certainly to all licentiousnesse and liberty. For if deadly sinne may consist with the Habit of Charity, much more with the Habit of *Faith* and *Hope*. And it being certain amōg Christians, that God will damne no man in whose soule he beholds the precious gemmes of these three Theologicall vertues *Faith*, *Hope*, and *Charity*; it will be concluded, that deadly sinne vnrepented cannot exclude a man from Heauen. An errour most pernicious, and to be banished the thoughts of euery Christian Man.

3. For the vertue of *Hope*, if I vnderstand him right, he sometimes destroyes it by *Presumption* with ouermuch largenesse, and sometimes turnes it to *Despera-*

*tion*

tion by denying sinners a possibility to be saued, euen with the best repentãce that they can haue. In proofe of too much largenesse it will be sufficient to alleadge words, wherin he speakes thus to Catholicks: (o) *This pretense of yours, that Contrition will serue without actuall Confession, but Attrition will not, is a nicety, or phansy, or rather, to giue it the true name, a deuise of your owne to serue ends and purposes; God hauing no where declared himselfe, but that whersoeuer he will accept of that repentance which you are pleased to call Contrition, he will accept of that which you call Attrition. For though he like best the bright-flaming Holocaust of Loue, yet he reiects not the smoaking flame of this repentance (if it be true and effectuall) which proceeds from Hope and Feare.* Heere he is very large, and against all good Diuinity will needes haue an Act proceeding from *Hope* or Feare, to be a sufficient and proportionable disposition to the noblest of the three Theologicall vertues *Charity*. Among Protestant Deuines there want not some who are so farre from belieuing, that sorrow arising from *Feare* of Hell, is sufficient for remission of sinnes, that they hold it rather to be a sinnefull Act.

(o) Pag. 32.

4. But neither in this doe I intend for the present to enter into long disputation, and therefore goe forward to shew that in other places of his Booke, he is as strict. For he calls (p) *it a doctrine of Licentiousnesse, that though a man liue and dye without the practise of Christian vertues, and with the Habits of many damnable sinnes vnmortified, yet, if he in the last moment of his life, haue any sorrow for his sinnes, and ioyne confession with it, certainly he shall be saued.* I see not how this agrees with his former doctrine, that *Attrition*, and not only *Contrition*

(p) Pag. 292.

*trition*, is sufficient for remission of sinnes. It is his part to reconcile and vindicate from contradiction his owne assertions. For me it is sufficient, that euery body may be apt inough to inferre from hence, that by this meanes a poore sinner must despayre, though he haue euen *Contrition* of his sinnes. For in those circumstances, he hath no tyme *for the practise of Christian vertues*, nor for the mortifying *the habits of many dammable sinnes*, if he meane the acquired physicall habits of vice, produced by former vicious acts, as he must vnderstand if he meane to say any thing. For if by Habits of vice he vnderstand Habituall sinnes, or sinnes remayning not sufficiently retracted by forrepentance is insufficient for pardon of our sinnes, because it takes not away our sinnes.

5. But he does more cleerly declare himselfe, and cast men vpon desperation, by what he sayes of vs in another place: (q) That although we preted *to be rigid defenders, and stout Champions for the necessity* of Good workes, yet indeed we doe it, *to make our owne functions necessary, but obedience to God vnnecessary: which will appeare* (sayth he) *to any man who considers what strict necessity the Scripture imposes vpon all men of effectuall mortification of the Habits of all vices, and effectuall conuersion to newnes of life, and vniuersall obedience; and withall remembers, that an Act of Attrition, which you say with Priestly absolution is sufficient to salvation, is not mortification, which being a worke of difficulty and time, cannot be performed in an instant*, and therefore neither *Attrition*, nor *Contrition*, which signifieth the most perfect kind of repentance will serue at such an exigent. It is

(q) Pag. 392.

strange, *Attrition* alone should suffice for pardon of our sinnes, and that it should be insufficient when it is ioyned with absolution, which I hope you will not say, is ill, though you hold it not necessary. Or if you meane, that Attrition is sufficient only when there remaines further time for mortification of vicious habits, this answere seemes repugnant to your owne words, where speaking of some kind of men, you say, (r) That notwithstanding their errours, *they may dye with Contrition, or if not with Contrition, yet with Attrition*, which, you say, God will accept. Which supposition of yours seemes either to speake of dying men, or at least to comprehend them. And (*pag.* 133.) you teach that for those men that haue meanes to find the truth and will not vse them, though their case be daungerous, yet if they dye *with a generall repentance for all their sinnes knowne and vnknowne, their Saluation is not desperate.* Where you seeme also to speake of men at the houre of their Death, when yet they haue not time to mortify the habits of vice. And indeed it is repugnant to Reason, that by Attrition a mans sinnes should be forgiuen, and yet this forgiuenesse depend on the future performance of mortification, which you say requires time. Howsoeuer, for my purpose it is sufficient, that by denying posibility of forgiuenesse to a repentant sinner, at the last instant of his life, you vncharitably cast men on desperation, and destroy the *Hope*, yea and *Faith* of Christians, which assures vs, that forgiuenesse is neuer denied to any that repents.

(r) Pag. 32.

6. But there remaines yet a more daungerous errour, that one may be saued with a generall repen-

tance for his sinnes, euen while he actually continues in them. This, vnlesse I mistake, is implyed in the words which I cited euen now (s), that for those who *haue meanes to find the truth and will not vse them, if they dye with a generall repentance for all their sinnes knowne and vnknown, their saluation is not desperate.* Where you suppose, that a man remaines in a culpable errour, & yet that a generall repentance may obtaine pardon without actuall derelict on of it. For if he forlake his errour, he is out of your case, which speakes *of men that haue meanes to find the Truth, and will not vse them.* A very easy pillow if it could be sowed vnder any vnderstanding eare. For if such a generall repentance would suffice at the houre of death, it would also be sufficient at other times, and consequently one might haue pardon of his sinnes whilst he is actually committing them. Or if this be not the meaning of that passage, it wil notwithstanding be true, that either sorrow is sufficient to obtaine pardon for sinnes, when there remaines no time to mortify the habits of vice, which is against your Tenet; or else that a sinner cannot obtaine pardon at the hower of his Death, euen with repentance. (s) Pag. 133.

# The seauenth Doctrine.

## *Takes away the grounds of rationall discourse.*

## CHAP. VIII.

1. IT may seeme strange, that a man should resolue *Christian Faith* into *naturall Reason*, and yet fall vpon a way which destroyes all discourse of *Reason*. But to these exigents human Vnderstanding is brought, when it forsakes the ground of *Christianity*. He teacheth, and endeauoureth to prooue (t) by no fewer then seauen reasons, that it is possible to assent to contradictions at the selfe same time. If a man wil speake in this to the purpose, he must vnderstand of formall and direct contradictions; for example, Christ is the Sauiour of the world: Christ is not the Sauiour of the world. Whereof to haue put thee in mind, good Reader, shall suffice at this present, according to the breuity which in this discourse I haue proposed to my selfe, not doubting but thou wilt vpon this reflection and thyne owne examination find that all his seauen arguments, are very weake, and so farre from prooving his Assertion, that all of them, not one excepted, shew directly the contrary of that which he intended, notwithstading that as it seemes of purpose he tooke this subiect in taske to shew some straine of wit, and to purchase some opinion of knowledge in Metaphysicke.

(t) Pag. 215. & 217. n. 47.

2. How it hath thriued in his hand, tyme may shew in

in some other treatise. Where also perhaps some other subtiltyes or quircks will be sifted: to wit, first, Whether *Fayth* be properly *Knowledge* or *Apprehension* (v), for he mightily mistakes in Philosophy. Secondly, Whether *obscure* and *euident* be *affections not of our assent, but of the obiect of it* (w); which were a strange kind of Philosophy, as if we should say, *God in himselfe* is *obscure* and *euident*, because some vnderstand him with an *obscure*, and others with a *cleere* or *euident* assent. Thirdly, his discourse (*pag.* 69. *n.* 48.) about the eye, obiect, and act of Seeing, with the proportion which he would make betweene them, and the obiect and act of Fayth, which must fall vpon an heresy condemned in the Pelagians, besides some mistakes in Philosophy. Fourthly, another subtilty about the essence of Habits, and formall motiue, to any Act &c. whereof he speakes *pag.* 138. *n.* 24. and does after his manner mistake. Then also it shalbe shewed with how little reason he despises (x) the distinction of being obliged not to disbelieue, and of not being obliged explicitly to believe; and with at litle declaimes bitterly (*pag.* 391. *n.* 8.) against the doctrine that some things are necessary because they are commaunded, and others commaunded because they are necessary. And finally, the Reader must not be depriued at that time of the recreation he will receiue by a speciall subtilty indeed, about a saying in Charity maintayned, *That the Creed was an abridgment* (y). Many more of the like nature will be then brought to the touchstone, and layd as flat, as now perhaps to some partiall men they may haue seemed lofty and learned. My purpose here is only to giue the Reader warning

(v) Pag. 325. *n.* 2.

(w) Pag. 328.

(x) Pag. 195. *n.* 11.

(y) Pag. 227. *n.* 63.

warning, that there be in the current of his discourse such shelues, as by crossing the general receiued principles among Christians destroy *Faith*, and consequently by the ouerthrow of *Faith*, come at length to ouerwhelme Reason it selfe.

## The eight Doctrine.

### *Opens a way to deny the B. Trinity, and other high misteryes of Christian Fayth.*

### CHAP. IX.

1. I Cannot omit notwithstanding here to shew, that one of the Reasons which he brings to proue, that one may at the selfe same tyme, yield assent to contradictories, must be ranked amongst the rest of his Doctrins, which do cleerly tend to the ouerthrow of Christianity. It is the third reason wherin he argues thus: (z) *They which do captiuate their vnderstandings to the beliefe of those things, which to their vnderstandings seeme irreconciliable contradictions, may as well believe reall contradictions (for the difficulty of believing arises not from their being repugnant, but from their seeming to be so.) But you (he speakes to vs Catholicks) do captiuate your vnderstandings to the beliefe of those things, which seeme to your vnderstandings irreconciliable contradictions. Therefore it is as possible, & easy for you to believe those that indeed are so.* Change but a word, and instead of Catholicks, put *Christians*, and the Conclusion will be: *Therefore it is as possible*

(z) Pag. 215.

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*like, and easy* for Christians to beleeue contradictions *that indeed are so*, as to beleeue those which to their vnderstanding *seeme so*. And seeing it is the common conceit of men, that one cannot at the same time beleeue contradictions; and he himselfe acknowledges in the same place, (a) that men should not do so, and that to do so, is both *vnreasonable* and very *difficult*; what will follow but that to beleeue the highest mysteryes of Christian Fayth, is, if not *impossible*, at least *very difficult*, and *vnreasonable*, and a thing that men should not doe. (a) Pag. 217. & 47.

2. Now that Christians beleeue mysteries which to humane reason seeme to imply contradiction, he himselfe will not deny. For though all the mysteryes of Christian Fayth be in themselues most sacred & true, yet to the weake eye of humane reason some of them seeme to be against the Goodnesse of God: as that, *Many are called, and few elected*, it being in his power to haue *elected*, and preuented with congruous & efficacious Grace, as well those many, as these few. And our vnderstãding is apt to be the more staggard with the depth of this mystery, by considering that Christ our Lord dyed for the saluation of all; and that euery thought, word, or worke of his was superabundantly sufficient for the Redemption of infinite millions of worlds. Other points of Christian Fayth appeare contrary to Gods infinite Mercy, and Iustice. Such is our beliefe, that for euery deadly sinne committed in almoment, and perhaps in a matter seeming but a trifle, as the eating of an apple, he should inflict an eternity of torments, if it be not repented. Or, that Infants can iustly be deprived of Beatitude in punish-

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ment of Originall sinne, to which they neuer concurred by any Act properly theirs. And it might haue been to good purpose, if this man had declared himselfe directly in these two points, seeing he was not without good ground *directed* to doe so.

3. But I goe on with the difficulty of Christian verities. For as the former may seeme harsh and rigorous, so others may seeme, as it were, silly, & *vnreasonable* if Fayth be resolued, as this man will haue it, into human *Reason*. Others beare a shew of repugnance to the most receiued Principles of Philosophy, and Metaphysicke, as the Mystery of the most Blessed Trinity. Others in appearance derogate from the supreme respect we owe to God, as the mystery of the Incarnation and Death of the sonne of God. Where I cannot but obserue, that this man speakes so irreligiously sometimes, that it may giue iust occasion for men to enquire what he belieues concerning the Diuinity of our Sauiour Christ, as when he sayth; (b) *that the Doctrine of Transubstantiation may bring a great many others, as well, as himselfe to Auerroes his resolution: Quandoquidem Christiani adorant quod comedunt, sit anima mea cum Philosophis: seeing Christians adore what they eate, my soule be with the Philosophers.* Is this matter of eating our Sauiour such a pill to your vnderstanding, that rather then disgest it you will turne Turke or Infidell? If you belieued indeed that our Sauiour Christ is truly God, you would not be scandalized that Christians adore Him, who would and could be eaten, no more then Him who stood in need of *eating*, and whom the Iewes were able to wound and murder, and might *haue eaten* (euen in a Capharnaiti-

(b) *Pref. n. 8.*

call sauage manner, farre differing from the manner we receiue him in the B. Sacrament) if it had beene his will to permit it. Perhaps for these reasons, hauing subiected Fayth to Reason, you with with *Auerroes*, a professed enemy of Christians, *My soule be with the Philosophers*.

4. He giues another suspicion of it in the passage following. For hauing alleadged diuers seeming contradictions in our Doctrine concerning the Blessed Sacrament of the Altar, he concludes, (c) that if I (that is the Author of Charity Maintayned) *cannot compose the repugnance, and that after an intelligible manner, then I must giue him leaue to beleiue, that either we do not beleiue Transubstantiation, or els that it is no contradiction, that men should subiugate their vnderstandings to the beliefe of contradictions*; which yet, as I said before, he iudgeth either *impossible*, or at least *vnreasonable* (d). (c) Pag. 216.217. (d) Ibid.

And who I pray, can vndertake against a cauilling wit, to answere all arguments obiected against the Blessed Trinity, Incarnation, and other sublime verityes of Christian Fayth, and *compose* all seeming *repugnances after an intelligible manner*? Deuines are not ignorant, what inexplicable difficulties offer themselues, euen concerning the Deity it selfe, for example, his Immutability, Freedom of will, voluntary decrees, knowledge of creatures, and the like. Must we then deny them, because we are not able *to compose all repugnances* after *an intelligible manner*? It may seeme that you are of opinion that we must; to which perswasion if you adde another Doctrine of yours, That there is no Christian Church assisted with Infallibility fit to teach any man, euen such articles as are fundamen-

damentall, or necessary to saluation, but that euery one may, and must follow the Dictates of his owne reason, be he otherwise neuer so vnlearned: what will follow, but a miserable freedome, or rather necessity for men to reiect the highest, and most diuine misteries of Christian Fayth, vnlesse you can either *compasse* all *repugnances after a manner*, euen *intelligible* to euery ignorant and simple person (which I hope you will confesse to be impossible) or els say, it is *reasonable* for men to beleeue contradictions at the same time, which by your confession were very *vnreasonable*.

5. And here I appeale to your owne Conscience, whether in true Philosophy, the obiections which may be made against the mystery of the Blessed Trinity, and the Incarnation of the sonne of God, be not incomparably more difficult, then any which can be brought against Trāsubstantiation. Some one whom you know could say in some company, where there was occasion of arguing, *Either deny the Trinity, or admit of Transubstantiation*; and it was answered, *We will rather admit this, then deny that.* And with good reason. For if we respect humane discourse, there are more difficult obiections against that mistery, then against this. And if we regard Reuelation, Scripture is more cleare for the reall presence, and Transubstantiation, then for the mystery of the Blessed Trinity. But no wonder if they who reduce all certainty of Christian Fayth to the weight of naturall reason, are well content vnder the name of Transubstantiation, to vndermine the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, and all the prime verityes proper to Christian Fayth. For

which

which cause I have some reason, as I touched before, (d) not to be satisfyed, that this man for all his brages of believing Scripture, doth make that account of it which Christians doe, and ought to doe; but deludes the Reader with specious words: as for example, when speaking of the holy Scripture he sayes: (e) *Propose me any thing out of this Booke and require whether I believe it or not, and seeme it never so incomprehensible to humane reason, I will subscribe to it with hand and hart, as knowing no demonstration can be stronger then this: God hath said so: Therefore it is true.* These are glorious words, but contrary to his owne principles. For resoluing Fayth into Reason, he cannot believe that which to his reason seemes contradictory, but must thinke that the Motiues for which he receiues Scripture being but probable, and subiect to falshood, must of necessity yield to arguments more then probable, and demonstratiue to human reason. And how then can he subscribe to Mysteryes *incomprehensible to human reason*, and capable of obiections which cannot alwayes be answered, *after a manner intelligible*, as he requires? And consequently he *must*, to vse his owne words, *giue me leaue to believe*, *that either he doth not believe* those misteryes, *or els*, that he *subiugates his vnderstanding to the belief of seeming contradictions*; which he acknowledges to be *vnreasonable*, and a thing *which men should not doe*, according to his owne words (f). And the Reader had need to take heed that he be not taken also with that protestation of his: (g) *I know no demonstration can be stronger then this; God hath said so: Therefore it is true*: since he teaches, that he knowes not that God hath said so, otherwise

(d) Chap. 6. n. 6.

(e) Pag. 376.

(f) Pag. 217.

(g) Pag. 376.

wise then by probable inducements, and only by a probable assent. So that in fine this must be his *strong demonstration*: Whatsoeuer God speakes or reueales, is most certainly true: But I am not certaine, that God speakes in the Scripture: Therefore I am certaine that whatsoeuer is in Scripture is true. Behold his *demonstration*, that is, a very false Syllogisme, according to his owne discourse in another place where he not only graunts, but endeauours to proue that the *minor* of this Demonstration exceedes not probability, and consequently cannot inferre a conclusion more then probable. Somewhat like to this is an other cunning speach of his: (h) *That he hartily beliewes the Articles of our Fayth be in themselues Truths, as certaine and infallible, as the very common principles of Geometry, or Metaphysicke*. Which being vnderstood of the *Obiects*, or *Truths* of Christian Fayth *in themselues*, is no priuiledge at all. For euery Truth is in it selfe as certaine as the Principles of Geometry, it being absolutely impossible that a Truth can be falshood. But the point is, that he does not certainely know or beliewe these Truths, as he does the Principles of Metaphysicke, but onely with a probable assent, and so to him the Truths cannot be certaine. The like art also he vses *pag.* 357. saying in these wordes: *I doe beliewe the Gospell of Christ, as verily as that it is now day, that I see the light, that I am now writing*; for all this florish signifies only, that he is certaine he beliewes the Gospel of Christ with probable assent. As for the argument, it deserues no answere; For who knowes not that contradictories inuolue two propositions? but he who captiuates his vnderstanding, assents

(h) Pag. 225. n. 5.

sents to one part only, and therefore is sure inough not to belieue contradictories at the same time, as he pretends. All which considered, the Reader will easily see, that his Doctrines vndermine the chiefest mysteries of Christian Fayth, and ouerthrow Christianity.

## The ninth Doctrine.

### *Layes grounds to be constant in no Religion.*

### CHAP. X.

1. I Said in the beginning, that as we could not know the way, vnlesse we first be told whither we goe; so it could litle auayle vs to be put in a way, if by following it we might be misled. But suppose the end of our iourney be knowne, and the right way found, what better shall we be, if withall we be continually harkning to some suggestions, which neuer let vs rest, till we haue abandoned that path, by following other crosse-wayes, as we chance to fall vpon them. This is the case of the man with whome we haue to deale. I will not build vpon his deeds, I meane his changes first from Protestant, to Catholique, then from Catholique to Protestant, & then about againe to Catholique, till at last he be come to that passe, that it is hard to say, What he is, neyther *Precisian*, nor Subscriber to the 39. *Articles*, nor confessed *Socinian*, nor right Christian according to the grounds which he hath layd. If you will beliene himselfe, for matters of Religion, he is constant in nothing, but in *following that way to heauen which*

*for*

from the present seemes to him the most probable. He followes that which at the present seemes most probable: A poore comfort in matters of Fayth, wherin errour is of so great consequence. And yet this cold comfort is vpon the point of being lost; for the probability is limited to *the present*.

2. Would any man thinke that in matters of this nature, and after so much profession that he is now satisfied, he should (i) professe himselfe, *Still to haue a Trauellers indifferency, most willing to be led by reason to any way, or from it?* And accordingly to tell vs, (k) *That had there been represented to his vnderstanding such Reasons for our Doctrine, as would haue made our Religion more credible then the contrary, certainly he should haue despised the shame of one more alteration, & with both armes, and all his hart most readily haue imbraced it. Such was he preparation which he brought to the reading of that Booke,* comming with *such a mind to the reading of it, as S. Austin before he was a setled Catholique, brought to his conference with Faustus the Manichee.* Did *S. Austin* after he was a setled Catholicke come with the like disposition to conference with any Heretique or misbeliever? To what purpose then doth this man bring *S. Austin* here, but to shew the difference betwixt the Fayth of one that is a *Catholicke*, and of one that is not; the difference I say in point of *adhesion* to his *Fayth*, the Catholicke beleiuing so assuredly that he may say with the Apostle, *If we, or an Angell from heauen euangelize to you (l) besides that which we haue euangelized to you, let him be Anathema.* Others not being able euer to be certaine of what they beleiue because they build vpon grounds which by their owne confession are not cer-

(i) *Pref. n. 2.*

(k) *Pref. n. 1.*

(l) *Gal. 1. 8.*

certaine and infallible.

3. In which respect also it may be iustly wondred with what sense this man taking vpon him to be a guide to others, and to leade them a *safe way* to heauen, professeth himselfe not to be setled in his way, and stil to haue not only a (m) *Trauellers*, but an ignorant *Trauellers Indifference*, willing to be *led* to any way, or from it, because he knowes not whether be be right or wrong; other wise if he know himselfe to be right, certainly it were not his part to be so willing to be led *to any way, or from it*: which giues me hope, that no man of iudgment, and timorous conscience, will aduenture the eternall saluation of his soule, vpon the writings or Doctrine of one, who is so vnsetled, & whom he either knowes not where to find, or how long to keep in any one opinion or profession, to whom the words of *S. Bernard* (n) concerning *Petrus Abailardus* (who taught that *Fayth* was but *opinion*) may be applyed: *Homo sibi dissimilis est, totus animus. He is a man that disagrees euen from himselfe, wholy composed of doubtings.* I leaue out his middle words, *inimus ille autem, foris Iouinus.*

(m) Prof. n. 2.

(n) Ep. 193.

4. One thing certainly people would be very glad to know, that whereas he maintaines, that his *Alterations were the most satisfactory actions to himselfe* (o) *that euer he did, and the greatest victories that euer he obtained ouer himselfe*: Men I say, would be glad to know vpon what new and great Motiues, these most *satisfactory actions, & greatest victories* were euer throwne againe, and frequent changes grounded. For his first being Catholicke, we haue Motiues in writing vnder his owne hand, and now in print. But what new reasons mooued

(o) Tr. 303.

him

mooued him to forsake vs, this would people willingly know. If he had no better reasons, then he answers to his owne Motiues, I cannot beleiue, that any iudicious Protestant will allow the alteration to haue been good, diuers of them being against Protestants themselues, and some repugnant to all Christianity, as may be well seene by the effects, which they haue wrought in him, to wit, so much vnsetlednesse in beleefe and Religion, that he knowes not to this day, what he would be at. But we may well suppose that as he willingly leaues *all men to their liberty, prouided that they improue it not to a Tyranny ouer others*; so he reserues the like liberty to himselfe, and is in fine resolued to beleiue *whatsoeuer for the present doth seeme most probable vnto him*: and so liuing in perpetuall Indifferency, be an example to others to be constant in no profession, which is as good as to be of no Religion.

## The tenth Doctrine.

### *Prouides for the impunity & preseruation of whatsoeuer damnable errour against Christian Faith.*

### CHAP. XI.

HE is no lesse prouident to conserue then industrious to beget Vnchristian errours & Atheismes. Suppose an Orthodoxe Beliuer fall first into damnable Heresies, then to Toreismus or Iudaismus afterward to Paganisme, and finally to Atheisme. Let him freely speake his mind to the contrary,

ged, and vntourned, to high and low, to the Laity and Clergy, to all sorts of persons: Let him haue swarmes of followers, let Circumcision be reduced, the Saturday obserued for Sunday with Iewes, or Friday with the Turkes, and in confirmation of these sacrileges, let Bookes be written. What remedy? Must these things be tolerated in a Christian Commonwealth, or Kingdome? with resentment of a Christian Prince? in despite of Christian Prelates? vnder the eyes of Christian Deuines? in the midst of Christian people? They must be suffered, if we believe this mans doctrine, (p) that no man ought to be punished for his opinions in Religion. *We are willing* (saith he) *to leave all men to their liberty, prouided they will not improue it to a Tyranny ouer others* (q), a good meanes to preserue euery one in his liberty without feare of punishment. *And the contrary perswasion and practise, what is it? It will be comes them who haue their portions in this life, who serue no higher state then that of England, or Spayne or France, who thinke of no other happinesse but the preseruation of their almes fortunes, and tranquillity in this world, who thinke of no other meanes to preserue States, but humane power & Machiauillian Policy.* How dangerous to Church, & euen to State this pernicious errour is, and what encouragement it giues for vnquiet persons to oppose Authority, and how deeply it taxes England & other Professant Churches of *Machiauillian Policy*, and to be *men who haue their portions in this life, who serue no higher State then that of England, or Spayne, or France, who thinke of no other happines, but the preseruation of their aimes fortunes in this world*, for hauing punished Heretiques euen with death, I leaue to be considered by higher

(p) Pag. 297.

(q) Pag. 179. n. 81.

2. I grant he would seeme to mitigate his doctrine, and confine it within certaine limits, but such, that his exception is worse then his generall Rule, vnlesse I mistake his meaning, & therefore present his words as they lye to the Readers iudgment. *There is*, saith he, *no daunger to any State from any mans opinion, vnlesse it be such an opinion, by which disobedience to Authority, or impiety is taught, or licenced; which sort I confesse may iustly be punished, as well as other faults: or vnlesse this sanguinary doctrine be ioyned with it, That its lawfull for him by humane violence to enforce others to it.* Thus he. As for his first limitation, it either destroyes all that he said before, or els it is but a verball glosse for his owne security. For if he grant that euery Herefy is *impiety*, and brings with it *disobedience* to Authority (as certainly it does, if it be professed against the lawes of the Kingdome, or Decrees and Commaunds of the Church, State, & Prelats where the contrary is maintained:) If, I say, his meaning be this, then his former generall Doctrine vanisheth into nothing; & it will still remaine true, that men may be punished for their opinions & herefyes. But if his meaning be, that no opinion is to be punished, except such as implyes disobedience to Authority, or licenseth Impiety in things which belong meerely to Temporall affayres, and concerne only the ciuill comportment of one man to another, as theft, murther, and the like; then he still leaues a freedome for men to beliene, and professe what they please for matters of Religion. And so, if they iudge a thing to be vnlawfull, which their Superiours affirme to be indifferent, yet they may hold their opinion, and disobey their Prelates, and may be able to

uel them from this mans doctrine, that to enforce any man in points of this kind, is vnlawfull *Machiauelian Policy*.

3. His second limitation seemes to goe further, telling vs, that a mās opinion may be punished, if this *sanguinary doctrine be ioyned with it, That it is lawfull for him by human violence to enforce others to it.* Frō whence, for ought I can perceiue, it clearly followes, that if any Church prescribe some forme of Beliefe, and punish others for believing and professing the contrary, the Prelats or others of that Church, who cōcurre to enforce by punishment such contrary beliuers, may themselues be iustly punished. As if for example, an *Arian* be punished with Death in any Kingdome, the Prelats, or other Persons of authority in that State, may according to his doctrine be lawfully punished, as holding it lawfull to enforce men against their conscience, which he calles a *sanguinary Doctrine*. How daungerous a position this might proue, if *Arians*, or *Socinians*, or any other sect, or vnquiet spirit could preuaile in any Kingdome or Commonwealth where Heretickes are punished, it is not fit for me to exaggerate; being sufficient for my intention, to haue made it cleere, that the enemy of mankind could neuer haue inuented a more effectual meanes then this freedome of opinion, and encouragement by impunity, for the enlarging of his infernall Kingdome by Heresy, Paganisme, Atheisme, and in a word, by destroying whatsoeuer belongs to Christianity.

4. As for punishing Heretiks with Excommunication, in words he grants it may be done, but I haue

reason to suspect what his meaning is indeed, & whether he speaks this only for some respect. For I know that a great *Socinian* hath printed the contrary. And if no man can be punished with temporall punishmẽt for imbracing that which his Conscience perswades him to be Truth, how can he be lawfully punished by Excommunication, for doing that which to his understanding he is obliged to do? For no acknowledging any authority of Church, or Prelats indued with infallibility, he is still left to his owne reason. Besides one effect of excommunication is to exclude the person so censured, from the ciuill conuersation with others; other temporall punishmẽts in all Courts being likewise consequent to it. Seeing then he denyes that men are to be punished for their opinions by Temporall punishments, he cannot with coherence affirme, that they may lawfully be excommunicated. This certainly being a greater enforcement then death it selfe, to such as vnderstand the spirituall benefits and aduantages of which men are deprived by that Censure.

*Iren. Philal. disp. de Pace Eccles.*

## The Conclusion.

BVT that which hath been said in these few precedent Chapters is evidently apparent, first, how befitting it was for the good of our Country in these present circumstances, that people should have learned by some such Treatise as this Direction, to beware of impious Doctrines, such as were foreseene that this mã would endeavour to defend this present cause, and suffering Charity and piety need. And that although nothing could

be intended more disseruiceable to Protestant Religion, then to see a Champion, & a way chosen to defend it, which openly destroyes all Religion; yet Compassion could not but worke in a wel-wishing soule, and moone it to desire, and to endeauour that such a way should not be taken, which might make people more and more insensible of any Religion, by blurring the common principles of Christianity, and digging vp the foundation thereof, to lay instead of them, the grounds of Atheisme.

2. Secondly though this hath not taken the full effect which could haue been wished, & that notwithstãding the warning giuen, he hath interlaced his whole booke with such stuffe as here you haue seene; yet this we haue gotten further, that it is discouered cleerly to the world, how deeply Socinianisme is rooted in this man, (and, as it is to be feared, in many others with whome he must needes haue had much conference since his vndertaking the worke) in regard that no timely aduise or Direction, no force of reason, no feare of shame or punishment, no former impressions of Christianity could withdraw him from keeping his thoughts and pen in such vn-Christian inke; nor the many Corrections endeauoured by the Approuers of his Booke, blot out his errours, though in respect of the alterations which haue been by report made in it by them, it is quite another thing from the first platforme which he drew, and put into their hands; and consequently how iust reason the Director had to suspect, that his true intention, was not to defend Protestantisme, but couertly to vent Socinianisme.

3. Now, thirdly, whether it be not high time that people should now at the least open their eyes vpon this second warning, and take that order which may be conuenient to preuent the spreading of so pernicious a Sect, I must leaue to the

the consideration of every one whome it may concerne. I do only for the present wish from my hart, that the maintayning of that Blessed Title, and State of Christianity, of which our Country hath been for so many ages possessed, may be the effect both of this mans wandering and wandering travells, and of these my Labours.

FINIS.

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## Errata.

PRefat. pag. 10. lin. 25. *to our nation* corrige *of our nation*
Ibid. pag. 11. lin. 26. *with* corrige *with*
Pag. 32. lin. 3. *is the corrige is so*
Ibid. lin. 4. *by so corrige by the*
Pag. 53. lin. 21. *Christ is God, lege, is the Sonne of God*

In the margent pag. 12. ouer against S. Bernard cited *Vide S. Bern. Epist. 37.*

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